

Monday February 2 1998

Albania D 5.50
Algeria F 1.50
Andorra F 1.50
Austria S 2.50
Belarus B 0.15
Belgium F 1.50
Bulgaria L 0.50
Canada C 3.50
Croatia K 12.50
Cyprus C 1.50
Czech Republic K 2.50
Denmark D 1.50
Estonia K 1.50
Finland F 1.50
France F 1.50
Germany D 3.50

Greece D 5.50
Hong Kong H 2.50
Hungary F 1.50
Iceland K 1.50
India I 1.50
Israel I 1.50
Japan J 1.50
Korea K 1.50
Latvia L 1.50
Lithuania L 1.50
Luxembourg L 1.50
Malta M 1.50
Netherlands G 4.25
Norway N 1.50

Poland P 1.50
Portugal P 1.50
Romania R 1.50
Russia R 1.50
Slovakia S 1.50
Slovenia S 1.50
Spain S 1.50
Sweden S 1.50
Switzerland S 1.50
Taiwan T 1.50
Thailand T 1.50
Turkey T 1.50
USA S 3.00



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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Comment

Polly Toynbee on Murdoch's threat to press freedom

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Can one editor run two papers?

Counting up Epstein?

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Blair line on Iraq under fire

Labour left hits at 'gunboat tactics'

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

BITAIN'S firm support for attacks against Iraq if Saddam Hussein does not back down over United Nations weapons inspections came under fire from Labour backbenchers yesterday amid signs that criticism may mount if push comes to shove.

with best by negotiation," argued the Labour MP for Chesterfield.

"Britain has just taken over the Presidency of the European Union. We have had a lot of speeches about how Britain is going to speak for the Union. Europe doesn't support this. Why should a British Prime Minister go to Washington and do everything he's told by Clinton?"

Mr Benn joins fellow doubters today in a meeting with the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who on Saturday assured the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, of solid British backing.

Mr Blair, seeing President Clinton in Washington this

week, and anxious to underline what is still special about the transatlantic relationship, said: "It is vital ... to stop this evil dictator hanging on to his remaining weapons of mass destruction or acquiring more."

Saddam Hussein is said to be capable of producing 350 litres per week of deadly anthrax, enough for two missile warheads or four bombs.

But yesterday George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, made clear that Britain remained reluctant to go for military action — not least because it is far from certain that this would force the Iraqi leader to comply with the UN attempts to stop him develop-

ing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. "We must keep him guessing — all he needs to know is that there is absolute resolution that if he is not willing to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions, then force is an option, and an option that will in extremis be used," Mr Robertson told BBC Radio 4.

"If the United Nations is flouted, if the will of the world community is flouted, if Saddam continued to have these dreadful weapons of mass destruction, which he has used in the past and he might use in the future, then what future for the Middle East, for the Gulf region?"

But the Linlithgow Labour

MP, Tam Dalyell, a campaigner against sanctions on Iraq, said he saw little point in another air campaign. "I just don't believe that air strikes without ground troops are other than counter-productive."

John Nichol, an RAF navigator who was shot down and held captive by the Iraqis during the 1991 Gulf war, also claimed air attacks would be a mistake.

"We bombed Saddam Hussein and his country almost back to the Middle Ages and nothing happened," he said. "All we are going to do is kill some civilians."

Mr Benn said on Sky TV: "The British military role is

not really significant, it's just a political cover for President Clinton. It would cost many, many lives."

British forces in the Gulf comprise the aircraft carrier, HMS Invincible, and other warships including HMS Nottingham and HMS Coventry, with a total of 1,800 military personnel. A squadron of RAF Sea Harriers from the Invincible last week joined US warplanes over Iraq help enforce the Southern Watch ban on air traffic in the region. The US has 30 ships, 300 warplanes and more than 28,000 troops.

Iraq warned, page 7; Leader comment, page 8



Biker battle leaves two men dead

Lucy Patton

AFIFTIES rock 'n' roll party ended with a bloody street battle and two men stabbed to death only 50 yards away from a south London police station.

A third man was stabbed in the violence which broke out on Saturday night outside the Rocker's Reunion dance at Battersea Arts Centre in Lavender Hill.

The two dead men were bikers from rival gangs, many of whom had turned up at the venue in stretch limos.

Searches of the surrounding area after the killings also recovered hammers, axes, knives and a cash, police said yesterday.

The dead men, believed to be in their mid-30s, have not yet been identified.

The injured man's condition was last night said to be serious but stable at St Thomas's Hospital.

The officer leading the murder investigation, DCI Steve Kupis, last night appealed for witnesses to come forward and said that if biker gang members were concerned about breaking a code of silence, they should be assured that all information would be treated confidentially.

There were about 1,700 people at the dance, and the stabbings are believed to have happened between 9pm and 9.30pm. The event featured a live rock 'n' roll show with star billing given to Joe Brown and the Bruvvers, a video show, and displays of motorbikes and juke boxes.

Bouquets of flowers were left on the blood-stained pavement outside the arts centre yesterday as police continued to search the area.

The dance was not policed as it was a private function, said DCI Kupis. He added: "There was an extremely convivial atmosphere in the event itself. All the trouble was outside."

He said there were several outbreaks of fighting outside the centre, with one of the attacks happening outside a nearby fish and chip shop and

other fights in Theatre Street, near the arts centre. One of the victims was found collapsed outside the arts centre and the other was found at the junction of Latchmere Road and Lavender Hill.

One was taken to the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital and the other to St Thomas's Hospital before both died.

A post-mortem examination of one of the victims was taking place yesterday at St George's Hospital, Tooting.

The area around the closed arts centre was cordoned off by police yesterday.

A barman in the nearby Crown Hotel said one of the regulars had arrived in the bar at about 10pm on Saturday, "covered in blood and in a terrible state".

He said the customer had been attending the Rocker's Reunion and had rushed outside when he heard a woman screaming. He found a man lying stabbed on the pavement outside and cradled him until an ambulance arrived.

He claimed the dead man had been wearing the colours of the Outcasts biker group. Based in the West Midlands, the Outcasts have a long history of violent clashes with rival gangs. Ten years ago, nine members were convicted of a conspiracy to inflict grievous bodily harm on members of the Pagans group of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, after a raid in which they carried sawn-off shotguns, meat cleavers, axes and knives.

The police were unable to say which gangs were involved in the weekend's fighting.

Few motorcycles were taken to the concert, said DCI Kupis. "They arrived from all over the South-east on coach trips and by car and stretch limo, but there were very few motorcycles."

The Rocker's Reunion was billed as the 15th annual event, and the programme said it had returned "home to Battersea in response to overwhelming public demand".

DCI Kupis said the event continued after the stabbings and said the people inside the arts centre may not have known what had happened outside.

In tune with the times



Classical musician Vanessa-Mae performing in Leicester Square, central London, yesterday to celebrate the Chinese New Year. The show included the British premiere of The Happy Valley Overture, first performed in Hong Kong at the ceremony marking the handover to China last June. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GOODMAN

Where musical masterworks are the hors d'oeuvres of love — with cheese and onion crisps on the side

Stephen Armstrong

AFTER the Royal Opera's performance of Tchaikovsky's *Enchantress* tonight, BBC Radio 3 is to treat listeners to a discussion on the more physical aspects of romance — a look at aspects of human sexuality.

Throughout the week *Bedtime Stories*, a 20-minute programme, will follow

the station's main evening performance, covering the lifestyles of heterosexuals, homosexuals, hermaphrodites, transvestites and bisexuals.

While Tchaikovsky gets linked to the mundane man and woman axis, Rachmaninov will be followed by a look at gay lifestyles.

Strauss gets cross-dressing, and bisexuality follows Britten, before the series ends on Friday with Elgar

and androgyny. The station does not feel that the subjects will shock their listeners out of their classical reverie.

"Radio 3's audience is more used to this sort of programming than you might think," said Hannah Andriasy, one of the programme's two producers.

"This slot has covered intelligent popular culture before and don't forget the passionate sexuality at the

heart of classical music, and, of course, opera."

On tonight's programme Sir, a chirpy lothario from Doncaster, talks about recalling from his first kiss because the woman had been eating cheese and onion crisps.

His story will be intercut with explanations from experts in the science of the field.

Homosexuality is to be dealt with by Time Out's

Paul Burston, and by "woman of a certain age" Elizabeth Wilson, who becomes gay clone culture.

Transvestite issues will get frank treatment, covering where to get clothes, how to cover up 5 o'clock shadow, and which toilet to use.

The programme on bisexuality looks at the campaign to reclaim Virginia Woolf and Oscar Wilde from gay historians.

The music used to complement the tales is appropriate. Sir talks over Mozart's loveliest aria sung by Papageno, while a transvestite discusses getting dressed up or "at Sir's."

What if? become as if, or as if?

Inside

Britain

The FA yesterday launched an inquiry into an attack which left a linesman unconscious amid growing concerns that security at top-flight football is inadequate. Page 4

World News

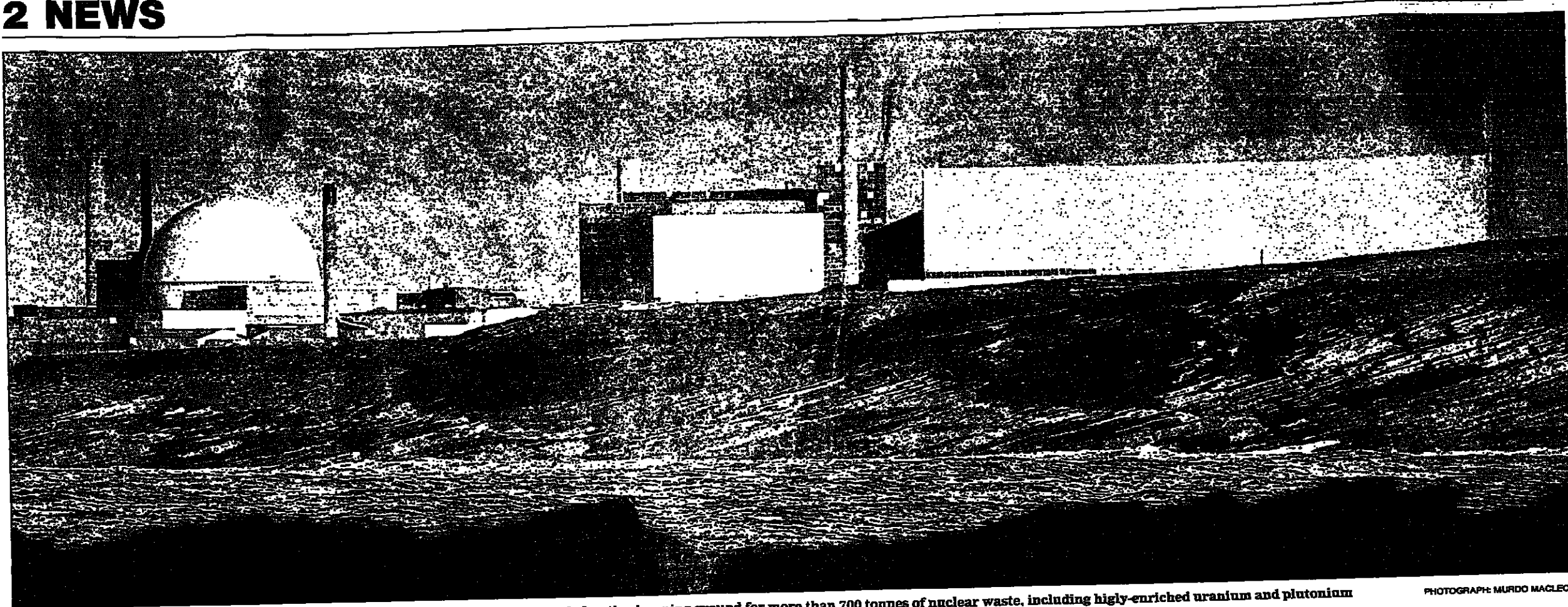
EU officials are heading for a clash with the German government as it begins new probes into price-fixing schemes by Mercedes and Opel. Page 6

Sport

Midfielder David Batty scored his first goal in 17 months to give Newcastle United a boost with a 1-0 win at Aston Villa. Page 16

Obituaries

Yehudi Menuhin, 87, died. Composer Sir George Benjamin, 72, died. Chink Crisp, 62, died. TV & W. Page 17



Dounreay nuclear research plant, where a second underground shaft has been revealed as the dumping ground for more than 700 tonnes of nuclear waste, including highly-enriched uranium and plutonium

PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

Fresh scare on nuclear waste

John Arlidge on cover-up at Dounreay

MORE than 700 tonnes of nuclear waste, including highly-enriched uranium and plutonium, have been dumped in a second underground shaft at the Dounreay nuclear research plant on the north coast of Scotland. The water-logged pit, known as the Silo, is still in use even though government inspectors ordered Dounreay to close it last year.

The revelation comes just weeks after the Guardian disclosed that more than 1,000 tonnes of nuclear waste had been secretly sunk in a 220ft cliff-top shaft which is crumbling into the Atlantic, threatening an environmental disaster. Plant managers did not mention the second dump when the newspaper visited in December.

Officials from the Atomic Energy Authority (AEA) conceded yesterday that 700 tonnes of low and intermediate

level material — stored "loose" in rusting steel drums or simply wrapped in plastic — have been dumped in the Silo since it was dug in 1971. It contains more than 40kg of uranium, plutonium, and sodium, which can explode in water. Several underground fires have already broken out.

Solid waste is still being deposited, even though the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate ordered Dounreay to stop last year because of safety fears. Managers insist there is no risk of a nuclear accident but environmental campaigners yesterday demanded the immediate closure of the Silo and accused officials of concealing its deadly radioactive contents.

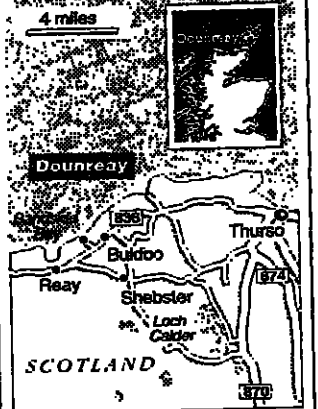
Lorraine Mann, of the Scotland Against Nuclear Dumping group, said: "Last year Dounreay released information about the coastal shaft. They said it was the only serious waste issue they faced. Now we find out that a second

shaft poses a serious threat to the environment and local people. How many more skeletons are there in Dounreay's nuclear closet?"

Dounreay yesterday denied withholding information and released photographs of the Silo. Morris Grant, the plant's spokesman, said: "We are quite open about the Silo and are happy to release information about it. Our policy is full disclosure." He admitted, however, that the photographs were more than 20 years old. Asked why managers at the plant had failed to mention the Silo during the Guardian's visit, he replied: "We get diverted."

AEA officials say they will use the Silo in line with the government inspectors' recommendations but no date has been fixed. "It will be some time over the next year or so — sooner if that is practical," Mr Grant said.

Dounreay bosses have asked engineers to draw up plans for the clean-up operation. The



job is hazardous because no proper records were kept and scientists do not know exactly what was dumped, nor what condition the waste is in after 20 years under water. They fear the sodium could explode when disturbed.

Robots are likely to be used to lift the waste to the surface where it will be repackaged

and housed in a secure repository which will also store material recovered from the coastal shaft. When the Silo is empty it will be cleaned and filled with concrete.

Dounreay admits the operation is "challenging" but insists it can be carried out without endangering workers or the environment. "It is going to be tricky but we are certain that we've got all the right techniques. I can assure you it will be done with 100 per cent safety," Mr Grant said. Cleaning up the Silo and the coastal shaft will cost up to \$1 billion.

The Silo revelations are the latest example of the lax safety standards that have made Dounreay Britain's most dangerous nuclear plant. It was built in the 1960s to house Britain's first fast-breeder reactor but the project was abandoned four years ago as expensive and dangerous.

The Guardian has revealed that for almost 30 years workers secretly dumped a deadly

cocktail of waste in underground stores. The public was not informed even though the dumps contained enough plutonium and uranium to make a large bomb.

The AEA insists its decision to release details of the Silo and the coastal shaft proves it has dropped its policy of secrecy. "In the past we did not tell the public everything they had a right to know. But our culture has changed," Mr Grant said. "We are now releasing full information about our operations and any problems we have."

But environmentalists are unconvinced. Mrs Mann said: "Dounreay is up front when information has already leaked into the public domain but they will never volunteer facts. They failed to release full details of the Silo to the press last year when they were loudly proclaiming they were being open about the coastal shaft and all aspects of waste management. They are as secretive as ever."

Blair heads for Clinton 'love-in'

The PM faces a reward for standing by his man, reports Martin Kettle

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's battle-hardened White House is preparing what insiders are describing as a victory "love fest" for Tony Blair when he visits Washington for a three-day official visit later this week.

Mr Clinton's officials, who have come through what one describes as "world war three" in their fight to save his presidency from the assaults of the special prosecutor Kenneth Starr, say Mr Blair has been "simply the best" of all the president's international allies during the crisis.

"He has been unwavering in private and in public," a Clinton aide said at the weekend. "The depth of their personal relationship is ever more important. Blair understands what has been at stake. He has never expressed any doubt."

In fact, early in last month's crisis, Downing Street sources expressed considerable private anxiety about the unforeseen coincidence of Mr Blair's visit amid the sex and perjury allegations surrounding Mr Clinton.

However, regular transatlantic briefings — including daily telephone conversations last week between Mr Blair's press secretary, Alastair Campbell, and the White House press secretary, Mike McCurry — reassured Downing Street.



The way they were... but will the Blairs recapture last summer's love-in in London when they visit the Clintons?

questions about the sexual allegations. Several Washington observers have suggested Mr Clinton will use Mr Blair as a "human shield" against his accusers while continuing his business-as-usual fight-back strategy.

As his poll ratings since the scandal broke continue to climb, Mr Clinton will today unveil the first balanced United States government in 30 years, giving a boost to his popularity. Washington Post poll, released on Saturday, gave Clinton a record 67 per cent approval rating, a majority of believed he would be re-elected if he were to stand for a second term.

Asked to ascribe responsibility for the crisis, 48 per cent said it was "mainly the work of his political enemies", while 43 per cent blamed Mr Clinton's own conduct. More than half agreed that "Clinton has only himself to blame".

Even though he is a head of government and not a head of state, the Prime Minister will be treated to the full trappings of a state visit as Mr Clinton shows his gratitude to his closest political soul-mate on the world stage.

Mr Blair will be met with a 16-gun salute during the official arrival ceremony on the White House south lawn on Thursday morning, and he will be guest of honour at a White House state banquet

that night, complete with after-dinner rock 'n' roll entertainment.

On Friday the two leaders will meet with White House and Downing Street officials for a seminar on inner-city crime and youth policy, which will be attended by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, and junior ministers.

The seminar, dubbed "Chequers 2", follows a format developed at a meeting at the Prime Minister's weekend residence last November, which was attended by Mr Blair and Hillary Clinton, as well as teams of advisers.

Mr Blair returns to London by Concorde on Saturday after an overnight stay with the Clintons at the Camp David presidential retreat in

Maryland, during which the Prime Minister is expected to join in Mr Clinton's weekly radio broadcast to the American people — another first.

Mr Blair remains a glamorous international newsworthy figure in American eyes, and the White House is doing everything to exploit the personal and political empathy between the two leaders.

Even before Mr Clinton's presidency came under assault, the Blair visit was seen as a mutual affirmation of the two leaders' "third-way" reformist policies. The Clinton crisis has cemented that bond, because Mr Blair believes the president's defeat, whatever the cause, would gravely weaken his own political credibility.

Tchaikovsky's Enchantress back on the map in performance that will set a lasting standard

Review

Tim Ashley

Royal Opera/Valery Gergiev
Royal Festival Hall

It was, perhaps, a foregone conclusion that the Royal Opera's unearthing of Tchaikovsky's *The Enchantress* would make musical history. The formula was well-nigh perfect: take a lost work that has been savaged by the censors, perform it virtually uncut, hire a conductor who is one of the finest musicians of the late 20th century, and finally find five great Russian singers who have Tchaikovsky in their blood. The result has put the opera back on the map and will set the standard for any future performances.

The *Enchantress* has a reputation for being tricky, abstruse and over-complex. Its plot — an amoral, assertive woman struggles to maintain dignity and independence in a

world that equates female sexuality with sorcery — ensured chronic bowdlerisation, particularly in the Soviet Union. And its astonishing emotional and dramatic range has led to the charge of musical unevenness.

Valery Gergiev welds it together to form an unrelenting span that makes the work's four hours fly by. He obtains wonderful, dark-hued playing from the Royal Opera orchestra, and Galina Gorchakova is by turns seductive, vulnerable and tough as the heroine Nestasia.

Larissa Diadkova is indomitable as the appalling matriarch Yevpraksia. Nikolai Putilin, gritty-voiced and anguished, is her husband Nikita, terrifying in his gradual descent into infanticide and insanity. Gegam Gregorian's Yuri is elegant, fluent and impassioned. Vladimir Matorin, doubling the opera's two bass roles, is slimily hypocritical as the sex-starved cleric Mamurov, and wonderfully menacing as the sorcerer Kudma. It's a thrilling evening.

Andrew Clements adds: In between rehearsals for *The Enchantress* last week, Gergiev also found time to bring the Kirov Opera's orchestra to the Barbican.

It was an outstanding event that not only underlined the quality of the ensemble he has produced in St Petersburg, but provided a reminder that Gergiev can generate as much excitement and drama in the concert hall as in the opera house.

There was Tchaikovsky in this programme, too — the final work was the Fifth Symphony, limned in clear, bold lines and founded on super-refined string tone.

The concert opened with the prelude to the first act of Wagner's *Lohengrin* — rapt, limpid and surely paced — but its heart was Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto, with the Norwegian pianist Leif Ove Andnes as soloist.

He had been a late substitute for the Russian Alexander Toradze, yet his partnership with Gergiev was remarkable for its unanimity.

A TOWN CALLED MALICE

"ROBERT CARLYLE is MESMERISING AS JO JO"

DAILY MIRROR



LOOKING AFTER JO JO IS NOW AVAILABLE ON VIDEO FROM ALL GOOD RETAILERS

BBC

on high profile role as British counterpart of First Lady

oncorde at e base and ture. ending the dinners ntrepieces le of the 'men will minars, aspects of al system husbands adia glare join the

Clinton's at Camp David on Friday. Although Mrs Blair and Mrs Clinton share many things in common — including successful careers in the law, a lifelong interest in politics, and the problems of combining family and fame — they also differ in many respects too.

Mrs Clinton is a politician in her own right, with her own staff, and has al-

ways been a central figure in the Clinton White House. She was given responsibility for the failed health care reform package in Mr Clinton's first term and has led the public fightback against the president's accusers in the ongoing Lewinsky affair.

A week ago Mrs Clinton captured the headlines with her high-profile allegations of a "vast right-

wing conspiracy" against her husband. This weekend she has attended the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland.

Mrs Blair is a crucial behind-the-scenes figure in the Blair premiership, but she has few staff and plays no public political role at all. She too stands by her man but, unlike Mrs Clinton, she does not have to give interviews about it.

JP 11/11/50



Tribal Gathering grew rapidly through the partnership of Mean Fiddler and Universe. But the two are set for a battle over the rights to the name, leaving punters with a confusing choice

Dan Gjaister on a festival fall-out



Confused? Revellers at last year's Tribal Gathering knew where it was at, but it may not be as straightforward this summer PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

Tribal rivals face judgment fest

It was billed as the "Glastonbury for the E generation" but it has more closely followed the travails of Woodstock, the high and low-point of '80s idealism.

Tribal Gathering, the organised rave that survived the introduction of the Criminal Justice Bill to become one of the biggest festivals of the summer, has become the subject of a High Court battle over the rights to its name.

As a result, this May there could be two rival Tribal Gatherings.

In the minnow's corner is Universe, the company run by Paul Shurey and Ian Jenkinson, two dance fans who started Tribal Gathering in 1992. In the giant's corner is the Mean Fiddler Organisation, run by millionaire Vince Power, who has also built up his organisation from small beginnings to become one of the biggest music promoters in the country.

The two organisations went into partnership three years ago to promote the Tribal Gathering events. As the festival grew to become the "dance nation's one-night stand", rave fans became disgruntled with its increasing commercialism. Now Universe has gone solo, leaving the Mean Fiddler flummoxed.

"It's shaping up to be a David and Goliath battle between a rock 'n' roll dinosaur and dance music," said Paul Shurey. "We're going to put everything into defending the heart and soul of dance culture."

Vince Power was equally forthright. "We put our hearts, souls and minds into Tribal Gathering 100 per cent for three years. Now Universe has tried to shaft me, but as I have shown previously when I had an identical situation with the Reading Festival, I



'It's shaping up to be a David and Goliath battle between a rock and roll dinosaur and dance music. We're going to put everything into defending the heart and soul of dance culture.'

Paul Shurey (left), Universe boss



'We put our hearts, souls and minds into Tribal Gathering 100 per cent. Now Universe has tried to shaft me, but as I have shown previously, I will not allow this to happen.'

Vince Power (left), Mean Fiddler boss

will not allow this to happen." As good as his word, Mr Power's Mean Fiddler Organisation is bringing a civil action against Universe to stop it using the name Tribal Gathering.

"The Mean Fiddler is seeking an injunction despite the fact that we created the event and did it independently for two years," said Mr Shurey. "The contract with the Mean

Fiddler came to an end but they're now claiming they had a verbal agreement with us."

The Mean Fiddler, which claims a new three-year agreement was reached last year, said: "The reason we are taking Universe to court is that we are claiming our rights in the goodwill of the event. Before it was linked with the Mean Fiddler, it was

a small event and it was the Mean Fiddler that played a major role in building it up to the current level."

With a court case set for June at the earliest, it seems that both organisations will avoid the words Tribal Gathering. Universe, in association with promoters MCP, is planning a festival at Knebworth on the weekend of May 23-25. The Mean Fiddler is

planning to stage its own dance festival at the Bowl, near Winchester, on the weekend of May 2. Universe's event is now named Universe 98, while the Mean Fiddler event will be called Creamfields 98, in association with the Liverpool nightclub, Cream.

"We've decided to call it Universe 98. We don't want to give the Mean Fiddler the op-

portunity to prevent us operating the event. But everyone in dance music knows the association between Universe and Tribal Gathering," said Mr Shurey.

There is evident tension over the direction Tribal Gathering was taking. For the last two years the event has been held at Luton Hoo, a stately home in Hertfordshire. At a cost of £1 million, last year's event featured 45 live acts, headlined by techno dinosaurs Kraftwerk. But with myriad stalls, catering outlets, security guards and the sundry detritus of the rock festival, critics argued that Tribal Gathering had more in common with Alton Towers than a rave.

Bigger, argue the core ravers, does not necessarily mean better. "This year's event will be a million miles away from the cattle-market mentality of the rock festival," said Mr Shurey.

"The industry has been controlled by a certain culture of people and there's a new generation coming through. We hope to work amicably with the Mean Fiddler but it hasn't worked out as a happy partnership."

For Mr Power and his Mean Fiddler organisation, the stakes are high. The company was floated on the stock exchange last year. Tribal Gathering forms the core of his business alongside other festivals such as Phoenix, Reading, and the Fleadh.

The flotation was intended to finance the company's expansion overseas, with Fleadh festivals planned for New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto and Melbourne.

This summer's court case will decide whether Mr Power went to the market thinking he had rather more than he actually owned.

Summer fun

UNIVERSE 98: Tented rave weekend. Watch out for techno-troubadours tripping over your guy ropes.

CREMEFIELDS: Dance weekend at the Bowl, near Winchester. Expect 39,999 other people.

PHOENIX: Upstart rock/rave weekend at Stratford-upon-Avon. Launched in 1993, Vince Power's latest contender among big-league festivals.

READING: Long-running long-hair rock and lager binge. Since Power took charge, head bangers have been banished to make way for hip rockers. A favourite with US bands.

FLEADH: Irish theme-fest in Finsbury Park, north London, traditionally headlining the likes of the Pogues and Christy Moore. Rapidly becoming one of the fastest-growing franchises.

GLASTONBURY: Long-running summer freak show for tie-dyed sun (and mud) worshippers, has become the top music festival of the year, where a headline gig can launch a band into the big time. Crowds now topping 100,000.

T IN THE PARK: Scenic Scottish knees-up in Strathclyde Country Park, launched in 1994, with glorious setting and top British bands lining up, it looks

set to be Scotland's answer to Glastonbury.

WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance) World music fest: sandals, children and beanie hats, lots of nodding to sitars and Burundi drummers in hot tents. Annual West Country event has spawned a series of day-long festivals across the South.

V98: Virgin's Britpop showcase in an Essex field.

Dome Boy backs aliens and bugs

THE mystery as to what exactly will be inside the Millennium Dome was solved yesterday. There will be "aliens" giving autographs, "computers with microphones", and facilities for visiting "bugs, crabs and dogs", writes Luke Harding.

That, at least, is the vision of Dome Boy, the eight-year-old drafted in to inject a child's perspective into the troubled £738 million project, in Greenwich, south London.

In his first media interview Dome Boy, known simply by his first name, Christian, emerges as a late primary school pupil who loves computers and is a fan of Bart Simpson and Arsenal. He is also keen on giant inflatables and giant robot spiders.

"I would fill the Dome full of computer consoles with microphones," Christian said yesterday at his home in Finsbury Park, north London. "There would be aliens as you come in giving autographs. I think it's exciting for everyone."

He is worried about the number of visitors and concerned for children who fall asleep and have to be carried by their parents who "might get tired". Christian also hopes that



Christian... wants aliens giving autographs in Dome

attendance at the Dome — which needs 12 million visitors in its first year to justify its huge cost — is not restricted to humans. "It should be for bugs and dogs and crabs as well," he said. "There should be dog trays full of water."

Tim Pine, of the design company Work, which was responsible for recruiting Dome Boy, last night said other people would be consulted, including pensioners. "The thing is to take what Dome Boy says with a pinch of salt," he added.

Tory gaffe over dead wife

Apology for researcher's slur on woman who died three weeks ago

Luke Harding

CONSERVATIVE aides yesterday heaped blame on an unnamed junior researcher for mounting a spectacularly tasteless slur against the dead wife of John Reid, the armed forces minister.

The researcher was "suitably reprimanded" after citing Cathie Reid in a list of ministerial spouses who benefited from improper government largesse, Conservative Central Office said.

Mrs Reid died three weeks ago. She collapsed from a heart attack while in her husband's Hamilton constituency, in Scotland.

Dr Reid, aged 50, who had been married for 28 years, has been on compassionate leave and only returned to work last week. "I will not dignify what they have done with a response," he said yesterday.

Conservative Central Office last night refused to name the junior staff member said to be responsible for the blunder. The researcher would be writing to Dr Reid to apologise, a spokeswoman said.

Mrs Reid had been named by central office as part of its "Snouts in the Trough" campaign, set up to highlight supposed ministerial extravagance on foreign trips and luxuries.

Dr Reid was said to have spent £3,639 travelling with his wife last year to a commemoration of the anniversary of the Battle of the Cambray in 1917.

In fact, the Reids spent just one night in France at a sombre service with veterans and their families. The reception, hosted by the mayor of Cambrai and his wife, included families, and it was proper under Whitehall protocol for Mrs Reid, who was 49, to attend.

"John scrupulously left her behind when he went to glamorous places overseas. The visit to France was the only time she went with him," one family friend said.

It is understood that Dr Reid was telephoned by several Conservative MPs yesterday, expressing horror at the attack on his late wife. "There is a difference between legitimate scrutiny and squalid attacks," one political

ally said. Dr Reid had just arrived in Cyprus on a visit to a British army base when he was told of his wife's death, on January 8. The couple had two children.

In the few previous days previously, a hectic government schedule had taken him to Brussels, Romania and Poland.

"The whole thing has been very distressing for the kids," a friend said.

The gaffe was yesterday being blamed on Alan Duncan MP, a trusted aide and friend of William Hague, who runs the opposition leader's young and largely inexperienced private office.

Privately, senior Conservatives have expressed concern at the inept and sometimes puerile way the strategy to brand Labour as arrogant has been handled.

Organised by Conservative Central Office's department of political operations, the "Snouts in the Trough" press release makes reference to "trips for totty" — a shorthand for ministers' wives. It names the spouses of Foreign Office minister Derek Fatchett, Agriculture Minister Jack Cunningham, and Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, and says all have enjoyed hospitality at the taxpayers' expense.

Tony Blair is accused of spending £975,000, including £125,000 on Downing Street refurbishments and £849,000 on political advisers at No 10. Labour last night described the attack on Mrs Reid as "disgraceful".

A spokeswoman said: "Regardless of who was responsible, John Reid deserves a full apology. It is an appalling gaffe and in very bad taste."

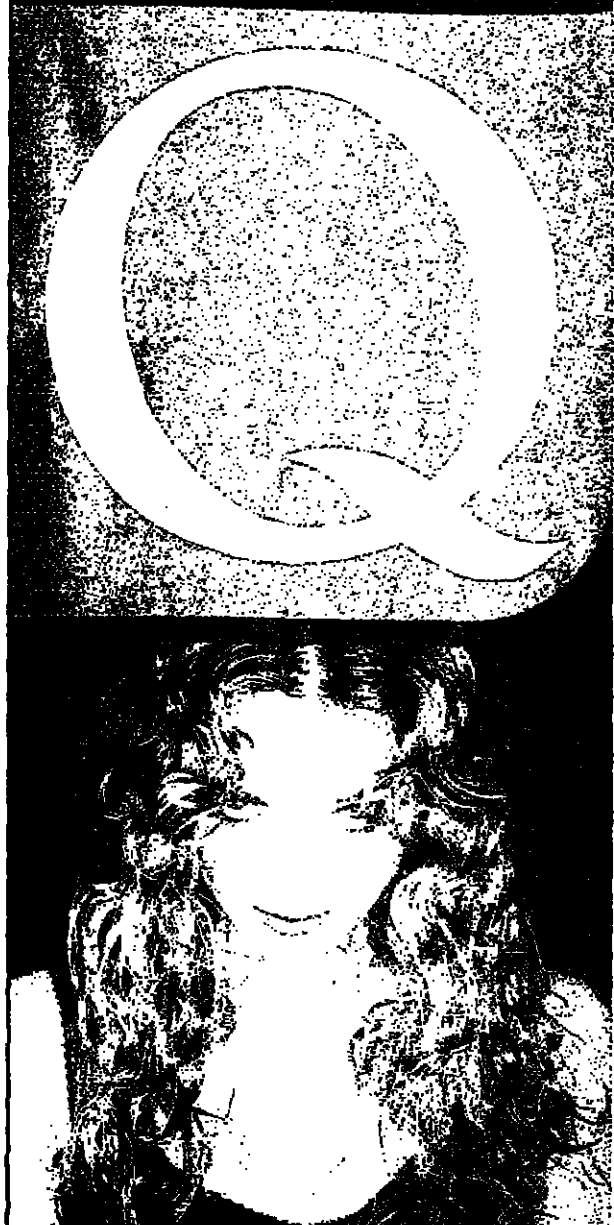
Cabinet colleagues of Robin Cook weighed in yesterday to try to damp down continuing stories and speculation over the Foreign Secretary's private life.

The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, and the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, all insisted in the media that Mr Cook was continuing to do a good job, despite the controversy.

Mr Cook's estranged wife, Margaret, also praised his abilities as foreign secretary and called for critical stories to be "laid to rest".

Cabinet colleagues show support in weekend political radio and television programmes came after Mr Cook had received advice and encouragement from the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, his long-standing political rival.

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Born again behind bars



The Rev Leah Kearns (left) with a prisoner in the chapel at Holloway women's jail, north London. PHOTOGRAPH: GRENDA PRINCE

Cynics question sincerity as more inmates see light

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

MORE and more prisoners are said to be turning to religion, including career criminals and fallen police officers.

Probation officers say "significant numbers" are now seeing the light at the end of the cell block tunnel. More cynical inmates suggest that their colleagues have mixed motives in converting.

One of those understood to have found God is Ronald Palumbo, a former detective constable at Stoke Newington police station, north London. He was jailed for 10 years last February for conspiring to import more than £2 million worth of cannabis.

Now in HMP high security prison near Sheerness, Kent, he is understood to have undertaken a counselling course so as to help other prisoners, such as those contemplating killing themselves. There were 70 prison suicides last year.

Palumbo is seen as sincere. Since he has served only a year of his sentence he cannot be accused of seeking to bolster a parole application.

Harry Fletcher, leader of the National Association of Probation Officers, said his members had noted a "significant number" of inmates finding religion in the past year. Prison chaplains had also reported a rise in interest.

There had been a surprising increase in those joining born-again evangelical movements, often with an American base, whose representatives had been visiting prisons, he said. "Traditionally the Parole Board has viewed conversions with suspicion. It's difficult to believe they are all genuine."

New prisoners are asked if they wish to register their religion. The latest annual figures show that 23,233 registered as Church of England, 8,457 Roman Catholic, 545 Anglican, 399 Methodist, 380 Church of Scotland, 189 Protestant, 132 Baptist and 102 as Pentecostal. There were also 31 Quakers, 37 Seventh Day



Ronald Palumbo... 'wants to help other inmates'

Adventists and one Dutch Reform Church member.

Of other main religions, there were 3,327 Muslims, 361 Sikhs, 230 Buddhists, 203 Jewish, 201 Hindus, 141 Mormons and 97 Jehovah's Witnesses. Of "non-permitted" religions, 131 were Rastafarians and 13 Black Muslim. A total of 13,556 gave no

religion, while 76 said they were atheist and 85 agnostic. There were two Druids, 81 Pagans and one Zoroastrian.

The more cynical prisoners believe that conversions happen when someone is about to apply for parole, and that religious services are an opportunity for prisoners to mingle with those on remand, who may have easier access to drugs. Most prisons now operate a strict anti-drugs policy, including random testing, strip searches and use of sniffer dogs.

Some famous former inmates have declared themselves for God. Chris Lambrianou, one of the Kray gang, experienced a "vision" while in jail for his involvement in the murder of Jack "The Hat" McVitie, after he heard another prisoner playing the Bob Dylan song Knocking on Heaven's Door.

Former inmates recall the days before radios and newspapers were allowed. In Pentonville, the chaplain would increase his congregation substantially on Sunday by reading out the football results.

Tory MP vows to support 'call-girl' teenage daughter

Lucy Ward
Political Correspondent

SENIOR Tory MP Tim Boswell yesterday described his devastation at claims that his teenage daughter was working as a high-class prostitute.

Following Sunday newspaper allegations that Caroline, aged 19, charges hundreds of pounds a time for sex, the shadow trade and industry spokesman made clear he and his family would continue to support her "in getting on with her life".

Mr Boswell, MP for Daventry, Northamptonshire, then sought refuge at morning service in the church close to his constituency home.

The report claimed that Caroline, a former pupil at Malvern College and now

studying art history at University College, London, conducted business by telephone from her flat in the same Westminster block as the apartment used by her father and mother, Helen, during the week.

It suggested she picked up clients at London bars and nightclubs including the Cafe de Paris and Stringfellow's. The paper detailed conversations between Caroline and an undercover reporter and printed a secretly-taken picture of her in a revealing pose. She is said to have claimed to the reporter: "Money is the only thing that matters. I love £50 notes."

The reports, which come only weeks after tabloid claims that the son of Jack Straw had sold cannabis to an undercover reporter, also followed a key policy speech by William Hague in which the Tory leader spoke of his commitment to family values.

Mr Boswell, an MP since 1987 and the father of two other children, confirmed he had spoken to Caroline about the claims, but declined to discuss her response or confirm whether the allegations were true.

In a statement, he said: "My family were very sad to read these allegations about our daughter Caroline. We love her very much. We will support her in getting on with her life."

Mr Boswell, a former Tory whip and education minister, has had a distinguished career within the party and comfortably held his seat at the last election with a 7,378 majority.



Tim Boswell: 'sad' to read claims about his daughter

MI6 shatters macho image with recruitment of gays

Richard Norton-Taylor

NINE years after the end of the cold war, the Secret Intelligence Service — better known as MI6 — has decided it is safe for gay men to spy for Britain.

The image of MI6 as a nest of macho bachelors was shattered at a supposedly discreet talk at the Heath Library in Hampstead, north London, by Sir Gerald Warner, former secret agent and Whitehall's security and intelligence coordinator.

MI6, he said, "have sent their first homosexual couple abroad". He also revealed that MI6 had recruited more women than men over the past 18 months. MI6, which operates within Britain, has already revealed it has recruited gay men, and most of MI6 officers are women.

For years security and intelligence agencies were concerned, was synonymous with reason — especially after the arrest in 1962 of the

Admiralty clerk, John Vassall, blackmailed by the KGB after he was photographed in bed with a number of men. Now, it seems, the agencies have taken the advice of those who argue that those who admit their homosexuality are no more open to blackmail than heterosexuals. They also seem to have laid to rest the ghosts of such notorious gay Soviet spies as Anthony Blunt and Guy Burgess.

Intelligence sources told the Guardian they could not comment on Sir Gerald's disclosure. It was "an operational matter", they said.

MI6 is likely to argue privately that there is no danger in sending abroad a stable gay couple. It is unlikely to welcome references to Graham Greene's classic spy novel, The Third Man.

Sir Gerald's talk was first reported in the Camden New Journal. He suggested that MI6 did not indulge in blackmail. "It is corrupting because we would be behaving like the other side and like criminals," he said.

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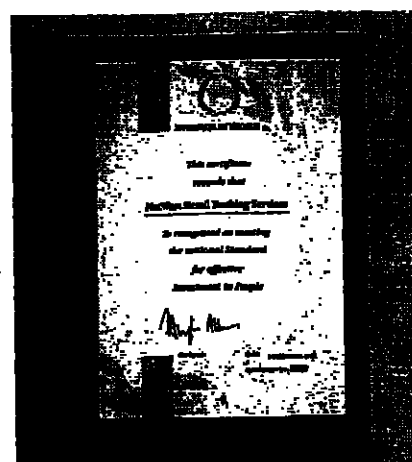
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Iraq warned as talks go on

Julian Borger
and Ian Black

THE United States warned last night that Iraq could face "substantial" force to end the stand-off over United Nations weapons inspections. But Washington, still exploring negotiated paths to end the crisis.

As Madeleine Albright, the US secretary of state, issued the threat — strongly backed by Britain — American officials claimed that opposition among Arab states to punitive military action was waning.

"If diplomacy runs out, we have reserved the right to use force, and if we do so it will be substantial," Ms Albright said in Jerusalem before flying to Kuwait. But action is not imminent. "It's not days and it's not months, so that leaves weeks," she told CNN later.

Ms Albright appeared to have won an agreement that Israel would keep a low profile in the worsening dispute with Baghdad in return for early warning of US strikes, antidotes to biological weapons and swift US retaliation in the event of an Iraqi attack.

"Our commitment to Israel is unshakable," she said. "We're Saddam Hussein to attack Israel or any of the other neighbouring countries, our response would be swift and resounding."

In London, George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, made it clear that Britain was reluctant to go for military action because it is far from certain that this would force the Iraqi leader to comply with UN attempts to stop him developing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

But he said: "All he needs to know is that there is also

Baghdad allows balloon crossing

A team of European balloons attempting a historic round-the-world trip, flew over Baghdad yesterday and on to Iran after frantic diplomatic exchanges involving the neutral Swiss government and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Unable to make contact with air-traffic control in Baghdad, the Breitling Orbiter 2 crew were in Iraqi airspace illegally for 30 minutes before clearance was given. The Red Cross was able to help them to secure approval to cross over Iraq. — AP.

President Jacques Chirac spoke to Bill Clinton on Friday.

President Boris Yeltsin's envoy Viktor Posolayuk left for Baghdad yesterday after telling Russian state television: "We have to try to get more concessions from them. They [the Iraqis] have made certain proposals."

Ms Albright said Washington generally supported an expansion of Iraq's oil-for-food programme, which al-

lows Baghdad to export set amounts of oil in exchange for food and medicine.

Officials travelling with Ms Albright said her campaign to drum up support for military action was going much better than anticipated.

US sources were jubilant about a leaked letter from Jordan's King Hussein — who met her in London on Friday — which placed the blame for the escalating crisis on President Saddam. King Hussein opposed the use of force in 1991.

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Ms Albright, going on to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, is not expecting open Arab encouragement in view of pro-Iraqi public opinion in the region, but is receiving different signals in private.

"We're getting a lot more Arab tacit support than the public pronouncements would lead you to expect," said one aide. "In fact, the message we're getting is: 'If

you're going to use force, do the job properly this time'."

US officials also reported that Palestinian officials had been more ambivalent than in earlier pronouncements against military action.

"They make the distinction this time between the Iraqi people and Saddam Hussein. They make the point that their sympathy is with the people not with the regime, and that's a change from before when the support was for Iraq as a whole," said one.

Despite a Saudi statement yesterday denying US forces the use of air bases on Saudi soil for attacks, Washington is confident it will be able to use Saudi Arabia as a logistical base. Most of the 24,400 US troops in the region are stationed on warships patrolling the Gulf. About half the 340 US warplanes in the area are sea-based.

Leader comment, page 8

Lebanon army hunts former Hizbullah chief

Julian Borger

Middle East Correspondent

THE Lebanese army yesterday poured troops, tanks and armoured cars into the Bekaa valley in an attempt to track down a former Hizbullah leader, Sheikh Sobhi Tufaili, and a group of the maverick Shi'ite cleric's diehard followers.

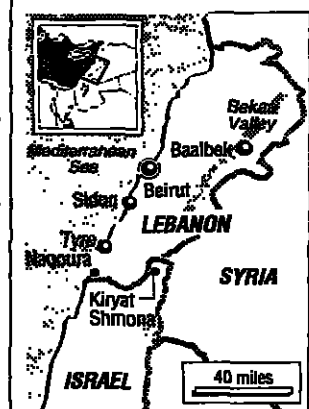
The manhunt followed a prolonged battle on Friday night and Saturday morning between government forces and the Hizbullah faction in the Bekaa's town of Baalbek. More than 20 people are thought to have been killed and at least 30 more wounded.

Sheikh Tufaili's deputy, Sheikh Khodr Tays, was killed when the army stormed a school the rebels had commandeered. But the radical cleric was reported to have escaped from the charred remains with more than 100 supporters to his home village of Britel.

organisation, dismantled its radio station and confiscated large quantities of arms and ammunition from its former headquarters in Baalbek. Its offices in Beirut and the Bekaa Valley were closed.

Reports from the Bekaa spoke of seething resentment in Shi'ite villages after the assault on their populist leader. A Syrian intelligence officer was reported to have negotiated a truce to allow Sheikh Tays to be buried in Britel, in exchange for which local leaders agreed to refrain from immediate acts of revenge.

The sheikh's body was driven through Britel in an ambulance, his turban resting on top of the vehicle, watched by hundreds of angry villagers. Reports from the funeral said most of the resentment was directed at Hizbullah's current leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, who ordered Sheikh Tufaili's expulsion.



Government reinforcements were deployed around the village with Soviet-made T-74 tanks and armoured cars mounted with machine-guns. Soldiers with US assault rifles set up checkpoints on the roads between Britel and Baalbek, searching cars for weapons.

An army statement said Sheikh Tufaili, aged 49, faced charges of endangering the country, killing military personnel and civilians, and forming an armed group.

The government sent the army in to the impoverished Shi'ite region late last year after Sheikh Tufaili had called for a "hunger revolt" against the wealthy Beirut establishment. The deployment came at the urging of Syria, which was concerned about a split in Hizbullah and the growth of radicalism on its western border. Damascus has 35,000 troops in Lebanon, many of them in the mountains on the eastern edge of the Bekaa Valley.

The Hizbullah (Party of God) movement, which Sheikh Tufaili led in the 1980s, expelled him from its ranks just over a week ago.

Although there were no reports of Sheikh Tufaili's capture by yesterday evening, the Lebanese army claimed to have destroyed his maverick

Gandhis return to stir up old fief

Suzanne Goldenberg
South Asia Correspondent

WITH her head draped in her sari like a demure Hindu woman, Sonia Gandhi came home to the family fief of Amethi yesterday, an avenging widow hungering for retribution.

Flanked by her two children, son Rahul and daughter Priyanka, Mrs Gandhi said she was not satisfied with the death sentences passed on 26 men last week for the assassination of her husband, Rajiv Gandhi, by a Tamil Tiger suicide bomber in 1991.

"The conspiracy behind the murder has still not been unravelled," Mrs Gandhi told 100,000 people. She also attacked those who denied a wider conspiracy. "There are some people in politics today who made my husband's murder easy," she said.

Yesterday was, above all, a family occasion. Intended to stir a poor constituency, it marked the debut of London-based Rahul Gandhi, aged 27, and an appearance by Priyanka's husband, Robert Vadra.

Mrs Gandhi said she viewed her visits to Amethi as a daughter-in-law returning to her hearth. Amethi has been richly rewarded for its Gandhi connection with avionics factories and light industry, roads and electricity.

Although Mrs Gandhi apologised for not contesting a parliamentary seat in Amethi, she said: "Even if I don't represent you in parliament, I will always be there to listen to your problems and to help solve them."

For the people of Amethi, the absence of a Gandhi in parliament is just temporary. Despite Rahul's evident boredom, villagers were convinced his entry into politics was approaching.



Sonia Gandhi, seated centre, wife of the assassinated Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, campaigns with members of the political dynasty in Uttar Pradesh yesterday. Her son, Rahul, left, waves to the crowd, while her daughter, Priyanka, and son-in-law, Robert Vadra, stand behind her. PHOTOGRAPH: SAURABH DAS

Tigers stalk Sri Lanka independence day

Suzanne Goldenberg
South Asia Correspondent

ON THE grounds in front of Sri Lanka's presidential secretariat, which still bears the scars of last autumn's suicide bombing, statues of the island's great patriots, well-bred men in suits, stride towards the sea.

Sri Lanka's progress towards independence, achieved 50 years ago on Wednesday, was a genteel affair, far removed from the mass unrest preceding Britain's withdrawal from India.

But its recent history has been the bloodiest in the region: 50,000 people have died in 15 years of civil war, and recent events, including more fighting yesterday, have almost eclipsed excitement about Sri Lanka's jubilee.

The celebrations, which Prince Charles is due to attend, were to have been a day of pomp and pageantry, with Buddhist rites and elephant processions at Kandy's Temple of the Tooth, the holiest shrine of the Sinhalese. Instead, they have highlighted the failure of President Chandrika Kumaratunga's military and political efforts to tame the enemy, Tamil Tiger separatist guerrillas.

Festivities have been scaled down because of fears for the safety of Prince Charles and the other guests, and moved from Kandy to Sri Lanka's parliament, an isolated building on a lake several miles from the capital. Yesterday,

the government repelled an attack by the Tigers. The defence ministry said 300 Tigers and 20 soldiers died.

However, such claims are often inflated; journalists are banned from the front line, ruling out independent verification of government claims.

About 1,000 soldiers have died since May in fighting to control a 50-mile stretch of road. The flare-up at the weekend was a last effort by the government to keep its promise to open the land route by independence day. The government had hoped

the anniversary would be an opportunity for healing, a symbolic reunification of the island which for five years had been partitioned by a virtual Tamil Tiger state on the northern Jaffna peninsula.

Mrs Kumaratunga's failure to bring peace is particularly disturbing because Sri Lanka has never produced a leader so committed to reconciling the island's two main communities. She came to power in 1994 by promising negotiated peace, a prospect more remote after the breakdown of a ceasefire with the Tamil

Tigers in April 1995. Since then, Mrs Kumaratunga has marginalised the guerrillas, driving them from their citadel in the northern Jaffna peninsula in 1995, but she has been powerless to blunt their military might.

Velupillai Prabhakaran, the Tamil Tiger leader, has been confined to jungle in the north of the island, but his teenage suicide bombers can strike anywhere.

Eight days ago they dodged scores of policemen and several roadblocks and security checks to set off a bomb at the Temple of the Tooth, killing

16 people. Even for Sri Lanka, which has learned to shrug off regular bombings in a capital 200 miles from the front line, the attack on the shrine that symbolises Sinhalese identity, at a moment when the security forces were supposed to be especially vigilant, was too much to bear.

After years of promising even to "talk to the devil" to secure peace, Mrs Kumaratunga announced a ban on the Tigers, ruling out talks. The demonstration of the guerrillas was complete. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, from Colombo's Centre for Policy Alternatives, said: "It would be unthinkable for the government to negotiate with a group that has attacked the holy of holies, the Temple of the Tooth."

Mrs Kumaratunga's flat came a day after the first local elections in Jaffna for 15 years produced city councils of moderate Tamil politicians and militants who have returned to the government fold. The vote was another attempt by the government to neutralise the Tigers as a political force. But few in Jaffna believe peace is possible without the Tigers' participation.

In India, meanwhile, a judge in Madras sentenced 26 people to hang for their alleged role in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the former prime minister, by a Tamil woman suicide bomber in 1991. Twelve of the original accused have died, most by swallowing cyanide. Three, including Prabhakaran, are on the run. The verdict makes it even more unlikely that Mrs Kumaratunga can persuade Sinhalese opinion to support talks with the Tigers.

Until the outrage at Kandy to retreat on plans for an early referendum on her constitutional package.

Mr Saravanamuttu said: "The attack could prove to be a watershed in the life of this government. It has given hard-line opinion something to latch on to. The Buddhist monks and Sinhala hardliners have been stirring up anger that the majority community is not being looked after."

Chronology of conflict

WHEN Sri Lanka won independence 50 years ago, about 23 per cent of the island's population were Tamils and 6 per cent Tamil-speaking Muslims.

The next decades brought pogroms, the assassination of Sinhalese and Tamil leaders, and the Sinhalese-only language law which, in effect, barred Tamils from government jobs.

The Tamil mayor of Jaffna, who personified moderate opinion, was shot dead in 1975 by four men, one of whom was Velupillai Prabhakaran, who founded the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) a year later. Known as the Tamil Tigers, the LTTE was the most ruthless of the guerrilla groups, and Prabhakaran, now aged 43,



was from the outset extremely secretive. In July 1983, Sinhalese mobs went on a week-long rampage in Colombo, killing hundreds of Tamils who had lived there for generations, and rendering

80,000 homeless. New Delhi, fearing unrest among the Sri Lankan Tamils' brethren in southern India, channelled more arms to the militants and increased the number of militant training camps on its soil.

Four years of warfare on the Jaffna peninsula saw a reversal in Indian policy; India's then prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, signed a pact with Sri Lanka which saw the deployment of thousands of troops against the Tamil militants. But they were not able to defeat the Tigers, in part because the Colombo government was secretly arming the guerrillas.

In 1990, after a record of atrocity which turned the Tamils against their self-appointed saviours, the Indian forces withdrew.

Arafat spurns withdrawal plan

Julian Borger

Middle East Correspondent

THE Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, yesterday rejected a plan for a further limited Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, but the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, called his response "hasty" and asked him to reconsider, according to Palestinian sources.

In talks on the West Bank, Mrs Albright had asked Arafat to respond to a plan that would turn over 10 per cent more of the West Bank to Palestinian control in three phases.

Mrs Albright herself reported little progress after talks with Mr Arafat and, on Saturday night, with the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mrs Albright said both sides would send envoys to Washington next week. The impasse is seen as damaging regional US interests.

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The Guardian

Being serious about Saddam

Threats need thought too

YES, SADDAM is an Evil Dictator, Mr Blair, but we knew that already. It does not get us any closer to deciding whether it is sensible to bomb Iraq. A calmer voice over the weekend came from the Secretary-General of the UN. It is in the UN's name that military action would be taken, so what does he have to say?

Kofi Annan is calling for more time to resolve the crisis, and with diplomacy not force. He has also repeated his hopes that any US action on Iraq will only be undertaken with the Security Council "on board." Mr Annan has to tread softly, but his concerns are clear: the issue of UN authority must come first. There is, as he said, total unity in the Security Council on the aims of disarming Iraq and ensuring that weapons inspections can be carried out. Indeed, this unity is the strongest argument put forward by the Americans and British for contemplating military action. Yet it does not extend to the action itself. This is more than simply an awkward detail: the British are seeking a new resolution which, while not authorising action, would provide a more convincing rationale. Can the UN Charter be sidestepped in this way?

The practical arguments against a strike remain forceful. Sir Peter de la Billiere, who commanded the British forces during the Gulf war, says he shares the reservations "about using the rather blunt weapon of a single strike military force. This has never worked in history." So too does John Nichol, the RAF navigator shot down in the same war. Fears about biological seepage if a weapons facility were hit are real. Those who suffered would not be the Evil Dictator but the innocent people over whom he rules. And yes, we know too that Saddam Hussein has used chemical weapons before. In fact, Western governments turned a blind eye when he did so against the Kurds.

The question is whether the situation is so critical now as to risk all the negative consequences — to the UN's authority, to the Middle East peace process, and to the people of Iraq — by launching a military action now. The slightly more positive noises coming from the region yesterday have to be assessed critically. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan (though not, it seems, Egypt) are finessing their doubts: a delicate balance must be struck between maintaining regional autonomy and keeping on good terms with the world's only superpower.

We have been given a range of scenarios from the suggestion that Saddam is poised to launch an anthrax strike upon Tel Aviv to the more measured suggestion that he will, unless checked, acquire one day the capability to do some such thing. The most alarmist forecasts have come from Richard Butler, the chief UN weapons inspector, who has upset Security Council members before by speaking out of turn. Mr Butler issued a lame clarification on Friday of his earlier claim to the New York Times that Iraq had enough biological material to "blow away Tel Aviv." Mr Butler should keep quiet, and his position must surely be expendable in any settlement to be reached with Iraq.

We need a much clearer picture than given so far on the nature and timescale of the Iraqi threat, and a calmer debate on the alternative options. Mr Annan's proposal for improvements to the oil-for-food deal with Iraq, though purporting to be unrelated, suggests a larger area for negotiation. To threaten military force has limitations anyhow in dealing with an Evil Dictator who has thrived upon war at the expense of his people before. The danger is that the threat will acquire an unstoppable momentum of its own.

A slice of good sense

Shell can afford to go with it too

THE DECISION on how to dispose of the oil platform Brent Spar — dumped in a Norwegian fjord since June 1995 — has been widely applauded. What seemed to be a mountain of useless and toxic scrap metal can be turned to good use after all. It will be sliced into six sections and find a new life as a quayside for Norwegian ferries. There is a less tangible spin-off too — the lesson that something is not impossible just because a multinational says "No".

When Greenpeace forced Shell to abandon plans to sink the platform in the North Atlantic, the environmental lobby got a mixed press. Most commentators concluded that it was legitimate for Greenpeace to use high-profile tactics to alert public and media opinion to a decision taken by Shell without prior consultation. But in this particular case, many argued, the method of disposal advocated by Shell was probably the right one. Less ecological damage was likely to be caused by the original plan to sink Brent Spar in deep waters than by the course forced by Greenpeace — to dismantle on or close to land. The onus was on Greenpeace, this newspaper among others advised, to mount a more solution-orientated campaign.

Now a miracle has occurred. Shell no longer claims that decommissioning Brent Spar on shore is impossible. The toxic sludge within Brent Spar is no longer an insuperable obstacle. The new course of action is described as an acceptable "environmental option" in this case. But Shell has shifted its ground to claim that the disposal of Brent Spar is "a one-off solution to a one-off structure." Shell's argument now is that sea disposal may still be the best solution for other oil rigs, though not as it happens this one.

The case of Brent Spar should be seen in relation to the EU initiative for a concerted effort to tackle the whole problem of offshore oil platforms. The commissioners for the environment and energy are launching a consultation project to work out a long-term solution. They point out that in the North Sea alone, some 450 steel platforms are expected to be taken out of use over the next 20-30 years — between 15 and 20 platforms a year. It is a big problem in need of big and imaginative solutions.

Thanks to Greenpeace's controversial action three years ago, Brent Spar has shown the way. A whole new technology can now be created to tackle the task, which will also bring new jobs to the marine engineering industry. Any balance of costs should include these as pluses, apart from the huge though less quantifiable environmental gain of not polluting the ocean. There is one financial minus. To decommission Brent Spar by the new process will cost £26 million. But set that against the huge value of the oil which was extracted through the rig, and even Shell can hardly complain.

Ethical Foreign Policy? (No. 397 in the Series)



Letters to the Editor

Batting for Britain

IN the interests of world peace and cross-party unity, might Tony Blair not consider appointing Alan Clark as foreign secretary in place of Robin Cook (Cook questioned on delay over "key" post, January 31)? Well-qualified by charm, intellect and wealth of knowledge, his ability to combine a colourful private life with a successful political career, and to attract literary acclaim for writing about it, is a masterly achievement. Such skill should be disseminated on both sides of the Atlantic. Sierra Hutton-Wilson, Priory Cottage, Evercreech, Somerset BA4 6HX.

YOUR leader on the Sabina Park fiasco (January 31) states that "a century ago Tests were routinely played on awful pitches and batsmen just had to cope". Quite true, but men have, on average, gained about one foot in height since the late 19th century, whereas the dimensions of cricket pitches have not changed. This makes a cricket ball a much more lethal weapon in the fast bowler's hands. Changing the size of the cricket pitch is one of several changes needed to take the game into the 21st century. Walter Cairns, 836 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M20 8RP.

YOUR correspondent A A K. Rakiewicz (Letters, January 30) has missed the point on Eurostar. Prior to the advent of its service, the level of train services between London and the Channel coast was approaching the capacity of the existing rail infrastructure.

The addition of what is at present 50 Eurostar services a day means capacity has been reached. The whole point of building the high-speed link to the Channel Tunnel was to improve the capacity between London and the coast. The bonus was cutting the journey time by half an hour.

If the population of Kent wants a better train service to and from London, this will not be achieved using the "do nothing" option. Some form of major rail line construction will be required. The road-to-rail conversion of freight traffic will also require rail line construction given the volume of freight moving between the UK and the Continent. J. McGrath, 75 The Rowans, Woking, Surrey.

We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear.

Iraq: why we shouldn't go to war

MARTIN WOOLACOTT (Still armed and dangerous, January 31) advocates the use of force against Iraq on the pretext that "the alternative, if it is to let Saddam prevail, is worse."

In fact, Saddam Hussein and his regime is essential for the stability and unity of Iraq. Notwithstanding his demonisation in the West, his military regime, to many Iraqis, remains synonymous with a united Iraq. If Saddam has done anything positive for his country, it has been to foster a sense of national pride and unity, which even the UN-led economic sanctions and US-encouraged Kurds rebellion in northern Iraq have failed to destroy.

Should the West decide to remove Saddam by destroying his military and political structure, it should be ready to face the consequences: namely the possible break-up of Iraq. This would, in all probability, mean something like Lebanon of the 1980s or Somalia of 1990s.

Randhir Singh Bains, 34 Shere Road, Gants Hill, Essex IG2 6TC.

MEMBERS of the UN inspection team from the US are not acceptable to Saddam, so why should not alternative experts be used? If a newly-constituted team was

accepted, this would reveal Saddam's real position, or even be a face-saving move for both sides. If it was not acceptable, it could not damage or change the present situation. But it would enhance the UN's reputation and prove that it was not entirely dominated by the US.

An alternative would be for the US to withdraw voluntarily, not as a sign of weakness but as a gesture of confidence in an objective process, and not a political manoeuvre.

This suggestion will seem unrealistic to many but surely no war should be embarked upon without every possible alternative being explored. Patricia Knowles, 84 Middle Park Road, Birmingham B29 4BS.

CONTAINING Saddam through sanctions and bombing does not solve the underlying problem of an oppressive and brutal regime that has hegemonies and expansionist political objectives.

The development of an alternative strategy aimed at inducing real change in Iraq offers the best hope for ensuring lasting peace and that the long-term interests of all parties are well served. The new strategy should be based on

supporting alternatives to Saddam, no more punishment to the Iraqi people, implementation of UN Resolution 688, diplomatic isolation of Iraq in the region and the world community and the indictment of Saddam for his crimes against humanity.

This strategy does not promise a quick fix but it is the most effective in serving the interests of all nations. Dr Mohamed Al-Rubeai, Iraqi Democratic Movement, 21 Wansford Road, Woodford Green, Essex.

ALTHOUGH most people delighted to see Saddam overthrown or even killed, there are other factors that we would be wise to take into account when considering what action should be taken.

Unilateral military action is contrary to the UN Charter. France, Russia and China are all opposed to such action and it would therefore be illegal in international law. The Arab world is also strongly opposed to a renewal of the war, and the so-called Gulf Coalition has now fractured, leaving us on our own. Even Iran does not now want to see its neighbour bombed.

One of the factors which has altered world opinion has been the horrific cost in human life arising from the

sanctions, which have cost the lives of at least half a million Iraqi children; another million are believed to be starving, according to UN estimates. Nor should we forget that, in the 1990 war, the bombs dropped were the equivalent of seven Hiroshimas, and Saddam survived. It must be questionable whether more limited bombing now would be any more effective.

We would do well to look back on the history of the West's relations with Iraq. Few people are aware of the fact that Britain actually used chemical weapons against Iraq in the 1920s, and, as recently as 10 years ago, the US was supplying anthrax to that country. The Scott Report gave the details of more recent British arms supplies, which went on almost up to the moment when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Saddam was then believed to be a friend of the West.

When I visited Saddam just before the Gulf war broke out, he indicated that the US ambassador had actually hinted that the occupation of Kuwait would not cause problems to Washington, and, in that sense, he gave the impression that he himself felt he had been betrayed by his friends across the Atlantic.

This sense of betrayal extends even more strongly to

those Arab countries which gave their backing to the UN action when the war broke out — for they were assured that, in return for their support, the Americans would use their best efforts to help resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute. Since then, the US has been seen to do nothing about the continuing negative policies followed by the Jerusalem government in its relations with the Palestinians.

The bombing, if it starts, will leave Britain and America dangerously isolated and vulnerable to violent reactions in the Muslim world. Tony Benn MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

THE fundamental reason for bombing Iraq is that "Iraq is in possession of weapons of mass destruction." But so are we. So is America. So are someone better bomb us, too? Irene Gill, 38 Yarnells Hill, Oxford OX2 9BE.

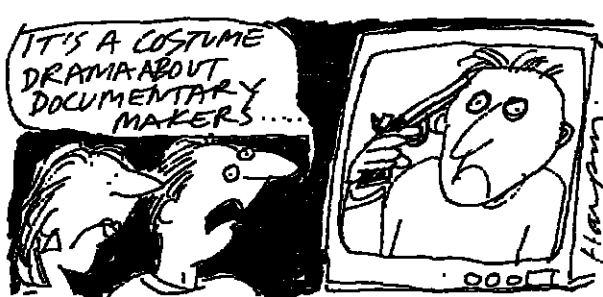
COULD it, by any chance, be the propitius in the internal political US climate to get another diversionary war going? Much like the Thatcher-Falklands-Belgrano episode? Dr Fred Kaan, 50 Hazelwood Road, Birmingham B27 7XP.

Slice of life

THE Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma argues the wrong point (Parma suffers an unkind cut, January 31). It knows that, since time immemorial, grocery shops throughout Italy have cut Parma ham onto grassproof paper, which was then wrapped in brown paper and marked "Parma" to distinguish its contents from other types of ham. Where the ham was cut did not alter the fact that it was Parma ham.

Massimo Montuschi is also wrong to say that anyone can slice any ham and say it is Parma. To sell ordinary ham as Parma is fraudulent. You cannot sell a tin of cod's roe and call it Beluga caviar, but the Beluga producers cannot complain if its caviar is sold in a variety of tins.

Judge Collins is correct: regulations do not include rules on slicing and packaging. A Parma ham remains a Parma ham whoever cuts it up — and James Hazan, 9 Thorngate Road, London W9 2DN.



Quality street

SHEENA McDonald (Serious test for ITV, January 26) says she has been reliably informed that only 800,000 people want to watch thought-provoking, well-made TV documentaries. This is simply not true. ITV's own figures demonstrate that, even for the graveyard slot of 10.40pm, on average 3.5 million people watch the, now only occasional, serious film, and ratings can exceed five million.

The public want these films, and advertisers want these films and film-makers want to make them. However, in-depth, serious films, particu-

larly if they are set outside the UK, cost more to make, and companies, ever concerned with their shareholders rather than the audience, want to spend less on production.

In all my years of making films for ITV, I have never known such a climate of fear and depression. I have never seen so many gifted cradlesmen and women prepared to talk their proposals to a down-market concept in the hope they might get commissioned. Journalists such as Ms McDonald should be supporting those people.

David Munro, Virginia Productions Ltd, 29 Stonor Road, London W14 8RZ.

A Country Diary

THE LAKE DISTRICT: Three of my friends have homes called Silver How — named after the lovely little hill above Grasmere. How many other houses in the country, I wonder, have the same name? Many of them, probably, reflecting memories of a favourite corner of the Lake District. The other day — the best day for nearly three months — I went back to Silver How for a modest, conventional walk and appreciated immediately why this fell has such a popular appeal. On its Grasmere side, at least — and the Langdale side is nearly as delightful — this modest height of less than 1,300 feet is a really beautiful hill in every way. There are splendid woodlands on the lower slopes, with thickets of juniper higher up, little crags sprouting out of the bracken, and deep ravines threaded by spectacular waterfalls. But it is the views, even from its lower slopes, that are so entrancing. We looked down on Grasmere and its richly-

wooded dale — the very heart of Lakeland — flooded in sunlight like a well-lit stage, the glistening lakes of Grasmere and Rydal like fairy ponds, and, behind, the mountain wall of the Fairfield Horseshoe. Even more dramatic was the sudden, close-up picture, as we topped the summit ridge, of the rocky peaks of Langdale Pikes, Bowfell and Crinkle Crags looking as if little more than a stone's throw away. Years ago, to make the most of a day, I would often traverse all the many summits of Loughrigg from Ambleside and then, after descending to Red Bank, go over all the little bumps to Silver How, turn round and go back to the start — but to make a change, deliberately avoid all the summits. This time, I just strolled down to Grasmere by a different route, watched people scrambling up to the rocky top of Heine Crag, and studied the late afternoon, golden orange glow on Fairfield.

A HARRY GRIFFIN

Burning up the gas in pursuit of Joe

Endpiece

Roy Hattersley

WHEN I first heard about it, Joe's telephone message was as welcome as a warm blanket. I had, for some time, been in dispute with British Gas, and the news that one of its employees had actually initiated a call to me seemed to mark a new phase in our relationship. And when I heard that Joe had found a way to cut my bills, I naturally assumed that my optimism was justified. His solution was, however, a disappointment. He proposed that I should transfer from the domestic to the industrial tariff. In short, my lime-stone house in a Derbyshire village should be designated a factory.

Much work goes on within my ancient walls. But I was not sufficiently attracted by Joe's ingenious idea to accept

it without further inquiry. So I responded to his invitation to discuss the notion with him. The number from which he had telephoned me was unobtainable. It remained so for the next two hours. My secretary — who has assured me that numbers are unobtainable because I have hit the wrong button — offered to dial for me. It was unobtainable by her as well. So I called British Telecom. They sounded genuinely bewildered. They could find no fault on the line. Perhaps the volume of inward calls had paralysed the system.

I waited a couple of hours as BT recommended and then, as they predicted, I made progress. The number was obtainable but engaged. It stayed engaged from mid-morning to early afternoon. Then, a young lady with a pretty voice greeted me. "Good afternoon. Welcome to British Gas Home Energy. To help us determine the type of telephone you are using, please press the star key twice." I was using a type

of telephone that did not have a star key. So I hung up and went in search of equipment that lived up to British Gas's exacting standards. When I found one and dialled again, the number which Joe had given me was, first, unobtainable, and then engaged.

Just after half past two, the lady with the pretty voice and I were reunited. She was just as friendly as she had been earlier in the day but, even after I had pressed the star key twice, she still had exacting questions to ask me. "Have you," she inquired, "a quantum or token meter?" My belief that the two meter types were alternatives was confounded by the instruction to "Press One" whatever the answer. I ignored all the other questions and waited for instructions on how to process "any other inquiry." After a brief pause, another lady came on the line. I asked, as I was instructed, for Joe.

I cannot recall if the lady from British Gas said that the company had hundreds of em-

ployees and thousands of telephone extensions, or if the numbers were the other way round. I am, however, certain that she refused, point blank, to look for Joe. Instead, she offered to deal with my inquiry herself. What, she asked, was my customer reference number?

I had left my customer reference number behind when I had gone in search of telephones with a star key. I offered my name and address as a possible clue to the location of my records. Had I made an indecent proposal, my suggestion could not have been dismissed with more hostility. Chastened, I apologised and said I would ring back, properly prepared.

From three until four o'clock the number was engaged. Then the lady with the pretty voice welcomed me again. I pressed the appropriate key, quoted my customer reference number and listened to yet another lady express surprise that the argument had gone on for so long. All I

needed was a meter-check — which I would have to pay for if the meter was proved to be in proper working order. All I wanted, as I told her, was a meter-check. Fine, she said. If I would hold the line, she would pass me on to the extension which organises such things. After about 30 seconds, I heard a familiar buzz. I had been cut off.

During the next hour, in the interval between the number being engaged and unobtainable, I spoke three times to British Gas. Three more times. I was welcomed to Home Energy, invited to press the star key, and eventually connected to a helpful lady, who offered to organise a meter-check. And three more times, I was cut off while waiting to negotiate an appropriate date with the extension which determined such things. The number remained engaged for the rest of the afternoon.

But the resources of civilisation were not exhausted. I faxed British Gas with what I

shall call a critical message, outlining the day's difficulties and asking how I could both begin and complete a conversation about a meter-check. That was three days ago. I still await a reply.

After 48 hours of silence, I decided that it was time to employ the ultimate deterrent. So I telephoned the Gas Consumer Council and asked how a complaint is made. Yet another helpful young lady told me that such advice could only be provided by my regional office. In vain did I explain that I only wanted to be instructed on the theory. When, as advised, I telephoned the appropriate outpost, a message, recorded in tones which implied resentment of my intrusion, told me that it was closed for staff training.

So I went home and looked for those ancient economic text books from which I learned that, in a free economy, the consumer is always sovereign.

Tangier Diary

David Sharrock

THE Mercedes taxi had seen better days and on the steep hill climbing towards Boulevard Pasteur it was coughing goodbye to the world. It was 20 minutes to six, a few precious seconds left before the sun sank into the Atlantic, and the man behind the Mercedes wheel was weeping with rage. He had gambled 50 dirhams that there would be just enough time to take me from the bus station to my hotel — and lost.

Incoherent with anger, thirst and hunger, he deposited my suitcase on the pavement, abandoning his fare and Mercedes and disappeared at a gallop into the sunset. A few minutes earlier Tangier's *ville nouvelle* had been bustling with activity: suddenly it was a ghost town.

What was going on? One word — and three syllables to strike terror into the heart of anybody waiting to get anything done during this holy month of prayer and fasting — explains everything. It is Ramadan, the month in which the Koran, the most sacred text of Islam, was first recited to the Prophet Mohammed.

According to lore, Abdul Qadir Jilani, one of the great Muslim saints, knew he had been born on the first day of Ramadan and therefore refrained from sucking his mother's milk until he was a month old. From dawn until dusk Muslims are expected to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and sex.

The cynics add to that list working and the taking of any important decisions. Morocco all but grinds to a halt for one month every year in deference to one of the five pillars of Islam. Pity the hapless reporter then, on the trail of a story but naive enough to believe that Ramadan is a negotiable obstacle. Wrong. Telephones in government offices ring unanswered. Appointments are near impossible to arrange.

On the other hand, do not be surprised to get a telephone call in response to one of your inquiries in the middle of the night. Observation of Ramadan turns the world upside down: day becomes night and vice versa. To the untrained eye the daylight hours seem to be taken up with spitting, snoozing, losing one's temper and reading French language newspaper columns about the health-giving properties of Ramadan.

Breakfast *(Iftar)* — is served as dusk descends, preferably with live coverage of prayers from Mecca on the television. The meal begins with large bowls of Harira, a spicy soup of lentils, chickpeas, pasta and meat. Soft-boiled eggs, dates and sweet pastries are served as supplementary bites.

Following a brief pause by the devout for the maghrib prayer there follow steaming mounds of couscous and further sweets, all washed down with water or soft drinks. The meal lasts up to three hours, but then a good brisk walk is essential, if you want to be sure of having enough appetite to eat again at 1.30am. After that you might wish to doze, but don't forget to set your alarm clock for 4.30 — time for just one more meal before the fast recommences.

In between times, the streets of Tangier are *en fête* as the entire family goes walkabout, or rather elbowabout, through the narrow alleyways surrounding the souk *cha*. Hustler activity is at a low, principally because most foreigners are smart enough not to plan a visit during Ramadan, but also because even the street-tough Tangierines are worn out by the rigours of the fast.

The fatigue is not brought on by hunger (how could you be hungry after eating all night?) but by lack of sleep. As Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim lunar year, draws to a close, week, temper are noticeably trying. I was witness to a spectacular punch-up at Kabat's bus terminal when one man was accused of queue-jumping.

It's not that Moroccans are especially pious compared with their Arab neighbours, but tradition runs deep. Abdul, a 27-year-old mechanic, has bought himself a better life in Europe with a marriage to a Belgian woman, yet still returns to Tangier for Ramadan. "It's a nice time," he says, "because nobody's working too hard and there's plenty of time to talk."

Paddy's taxation penny drops

Commentary
Peter Preston

HOW MANY times can you play the same tune on your tin round of applause? The question belongs to Paddy Ashdown — but the answer involves all of us who believe (or profess to believe) that Joe and Josephine Public are raring to pay more taxes. It is thus the defining question of the first Blair year.

Ashdown's chosen instrument, of course, is a penny whistle — as in "A penny on income tax for education if, in best judgment, it is the best use of that money." That's the absolutely necessary to secure the future of our nation's most precious investment, our children. He played it relentlessly through the 1992 and 1996 elections, and has been noting away ever since. Last week, though, there were squeals from the orchestra pit.

Either the penny has dropped down some conve-

nient slot, or we're in for the Captain's Symphonic Variations, or, since this is politics, both. On the one hand — prompted by some of his newer Westminster intake — Ashdown admits that running the 1p gambit for yet another election could look pretty irrelevant if Gordon Brown empties his fabled war chest over the voters on cue. On the other hand, greater themes arise, in which smaller, fatigued ones may be handily submerged.

"The age of deference is dead", according to Paddy in full lecture mode. "It is time to reconnect the taxpayer — the citizens — with the tax spender — the politician — and by so doing rebuild trust and legitimacy in the process of taxation". He wants no efficacy of that process. Only by adult, open debate will this "crisis of trust" be resolved.

It's a suddenly fashionable refrain. John Prescott thinks he hears echoes of it from the Treasury over road congestion and public transport. We're plunging ever deeper into a new belt of green taxes where countryside house builders pay extra levies for

urban regeneration projects. But look, I fear, before you leap too eagerly. The Tony Blair who jabs at "affluence tests" and the like, who clings ferociously to Ken Clarke's public spending limits, is not about to dance too far down this yellow brick road. He has a more cynical view of human nature. Perhaps he can't quite remember a golden age when taxation was best beloved of the populace. Maybe subterfuge is, and will always be, his necessary handmaiden.

And maybe — let's face it — he's right. Take one giveaway aside from the Ashdown script, if we had the full audit apparatus, he said, "we could then assess whether or not the public want their money to be spent on ministerial limousines or the National Health Service". Where else did you hear that song last week? Ah yes, from Nigel de Gruchy of the Schoolmasters' union.

"While millions of pounds are being spent on parties for pop stars at No 10, refurbishing palatial ministerial apartments and taking girlfriends on foreign trips, lowly-paid public employees are being screwed to save the Treasury a few miserable pounds." We can all, alas, play such games. (They are a staple of newspaper life). But they don't remotely address "crises of trust", or bestow the

"public legitimacy" Ashdown would like. For the answers you get depend on the questions you pose. Do you — like the Liberal Democrats and Gordon Brown — want to join a European monetary union which, as night follows day, will eventually standardise VAT rates across the continent, bringing British food and children's clothes into the net? Would you (today's easy target) rather build 10 new hospitals or spend the cash raining missiles on Baghdad to keep Bill Clinton sweet? What kind of pay rise does the Flying Squad deserve this year?

The trouble with money, like the trouble with sex, is that hypocrisy stalks its every move. The scope for argument is simply infinite. Did Blair, last week, set a fine example by capping his own salary at £40,000 below the due going rate — and £80,000 below the top civil servant at his side? Perhaps; but why then was the top civil ser-

The Government we have works to crude, messy generalities

vants' trade union "bitterly disappointed" by the short-sightedness of their own "hard earned award"? Would the Prime Minister have done better to take the rise and buy his own canapés for Downing Street shindigs? Hypothecation, with all its attendant focus groupery, doesn't produce a fairer, juster society. Ask the Swiss in their referendum-choked misery, where localised democracy first sacrifices particu-

arrangements then freezes them in self-interest (and a fog of tax regimes). Hypothecation, absolutely inevitably, is the language of phoney choices which echoes the equally inevitable language of politicised options. That's why Ashdown sets Prescott's ministerial limo against the wonders of the NHS. That's why — one current bemusement — "faceless bureaucrats" are easy chopping blocks, while angels of mercy by the bedside automatically deserve far more.

Life, on examination, is always more complex than that. (The NHS bureaucrats, who are mostly ex-nurses anyway, have the job of getting patients into the beds in the first place). But none of the apparatus of public wish listery can, or will, operate with such subtlety.

The government we have works to crude, messy generalities, anxious reconciliations with market forces. The reason why teachers should have got a better rise last week is that we are desperately short of them in properly qualified numbers. It has nothing to do with Robin Cook's travels and travails. The reason why Blair cannot Harriet Harman's affluence tests is that one man's affluence is another man's hard-earned reward. The reason why we can't (pace Paddy) "restore public support to the process of taxation" is that, in the reality of the voting booth, such support does not — and has never — existed.

Grudging acceptance, with occasional electoral retribution, is the best we can expect from the glum hundreds of thousands who took their brown envelopes to the Revenue offices this weekend. A penny for your thoughts, but, I fear, no more than a penny.

Heavy traffic on the road to nowhere



Isabel Hilton

THERE was remarkably little opposition in the Commons on Friday to the second reading of Cynog Dafydd's traffic reduction bill. Like motherhood and apple pie, traffic reduction is the kind of self-evident virtue that attracts pious support by the bucketful.

But anyone who imagines that government support of the Road Traffic Reduction (UK) Targets Bill means that there will be any less traffic on the roads, or less pollution or any fewer people killed and maimed in car crashes, is likely to be sorely disappointed. The bill was supported by the Government last Friday only because it had been virtually castrated. It gives the Government a tinge of green, while committing it to almost nothing.

The troika of the bill's sponsors — the Green Party, Friends of the Earth and Plaid Cymru — duly celebrated the fact that government support will ensure the bill becomes law. But the price of that government support was the abandonment of fixed targets for traffic reduction. Without the targets, the Government has at most postponed, and at most, escaped the obligations that the environmental lobby wanted to impose.

The bill as first drafted would have written into law an obligation on the Government to reduce road traffic by 10 per cent by the year 2010, based on 1990 levels. But since that target was devised, traffic has already increased by 6 per cent and is projected to rise by another 30 per cent.

Civil servants calculated that the 10 per cent cut would, in reality, amount to a 40 per cent reduction on projected 2010 traffic levels. It was, they decided, impossible to achieve. The problem for the Government was that large numbers of backbenchers and not a few ministers — including Glenda Jackson — had lent public support to the bill while in opposition. The only way to avoid the embarrassment of reneging on that support was to remove the targets.

Why did the campaigners accept the deal? Because without the Government's backing the bill would fail, not least because the time allotted for private members' bills will be dominated in the current session by the misguided but popular bill to ban fox hunting. For the green cam-

paigners, removing the targets was a price worth paying for government support: half a victory, they say, is better than no victory at all.

Friends of the Earth admit to private reservations but argue that once the measure becomes law, traffic reduction will become an inescapable standard by which government policy can be measured, something to be factored into transport policy, into support for local government, and to be urged upon private companies.

All this may be true, but it will only work if the Government is really committed to the kind of environmental virtue that it found so easy to embrace in opposition. In government, though, the ardour has cooled. Individual ministers raise the occasional flag, but there is no sign of Treasury interest, let alone support. Without Treasury backing, nothing serious will happen.

Dawn Primarolo, allegedly the greenest member of the Treasury team, did not even find time to appear before the environmental audit committee last week. Relatively small measures promised in opposition — such as heavier taxation on company cars and a change in road tax to favour smaller cars — have yet to materialise. Other promises on roads — most notably the commitment to scrap the Birmingham Northern Relief Road — have been broken.

SO WHAT will be the effect of the Road Traffic Reduction Bill? In the short term, nothing at all. The Government will now set its own targets, and given that officials think a reduction of 10 per cent by 2010 is completely unattainable, it would be a miracle if the Government's self-imposed targets come anywhere near that.

The first tactic, though, is likely to be delay. The new bill allows a year from the passage of the law before targets must be set, but the Government will try to stretch this interval. It will argue that it needs the results of the first year of last year's Traffic Reaction Act, which demanded traffic reduction measures from local authorities, before national targets can be set.

The Government has already delayed those results for a year by failing to issue policy guidelines in time. At this rate, Labour will be able to prevaricate until the year 2000 before it has to set any targets at all. What's the betting that when it does, it will be forced, with great regret, to conclude that the environmental lobbies' targets are unrealistic? And the beauty of this is that The Road Traffic Reduction (UK) Targets Act 1998 can be wheeled in, when necessary, as evidence of the Government's environmental virtue.



Will Blair dare?

In her first article on rejoining the Guardian, the distinguished commentator **Polly Toynbee** blames Rupert Murdoch for the failure of the Independent — and asks if the Government will ever stand up to him



LAST Friday's deferential of another excellent Independent editor from the eighth floor of Canary Wharf was a bloody business. Andrew Marr, the union told us, was barred from entering the building or approaching any member of staff to say goodbye. It is the way David Montgomery of the Mirror Group does these things.

Marr's predecessor, Ian Hargreaves (now editor of the New Statesman), was treated in exactly the same way. The scene was drawn from the floor, a flood of unknown young faces suddenly materialised all around her, apparently drawn from the Mirror advertising department, (though one was a Live-TV badge; they were the only ones seen to clap her appointment).

For with Marr on Friday went what is almost certainly the last chance for the Independent that I worked for and have admired since its bold emergence in 1988. A sad day. There ought to be room in the market for two good liberal/left of centre broadsheets in a country that voted Labour and Liberal Democrat so overwhelmingly last year.

The Independent's managing director says the plan is to take it downmarket into an imaginary niche somewhere in the Ritz-thin gap between the Times and the Mail. Marr and his admirable deputy Cohn Hughes, (also fired on Friday), fought a last ditch battle, avoid an impossible £3.5 million cut. They fought the persistent demands for the paper to aim for some mythical bright young middle man-

ager, consumer orientated, lifestyle dominated, and young and successful are dumbly bored by anything but interior design and Conran restaurants. Throughout, Tony O'Reilly, the other main owner, has sat on his hands and done nothing to save it — no white knight.

All this has been a painful but parochial tragedy. The Independent's present unfortunate ownership is only another everyday chapter in the long history of newspapers, like football teams, often suffer the depredations of know-nothing, pig-ignorant owners. No, the bigger story is a far more serious matter than the petty doings of yet another small-time media tyrant. The small-time failure, because its circulation flagged and failure in any business almost always brings bloodshed and recrimination.

But why has it failed? The most important reason has been Rupert Murdoch's savage price war. The Indie's circulation plummeted on a Monday, when Murdoch sells his Times at 10p. If the Indie sold as many copies on Mondays as it sells every other day, the paper would be comfortably in profit. As the youngest broadsheet with the youngest readership, it also has the highest proportion who buy their paper on the newsstand, easily tempted by the 10p offer. Now Murdoch has slashed the Times price on a Saturday too, with likely devastating results. He sells the paper at these prices not only below cost, but below what he has to pay his distributors. The more he prints, the more it costs him.

So the Times is probably the biggest loss-maker of all

time. The opaque and mysteriously shifting finances of News International leave media analysts guessing, but it is estimated Murdoch lost some £70 million on the Times last year. Company folklore says that once you engage in a price-cutting war, you must go on until you drive at least one competitor out of the market. The virtual destruction of the Independent may only be collateral damage in pursuit of his chief aim — knocking Conrad Black off his pre-eminent Daily Telegraph perch. This kind of predatory pricing is outlawed in Europe and America under anti-trust legislation. Companies are simply not permitted to drive others out of business by selling products below cost. Britain alone turns a blind eye.

The wonder of Murdoch is his voracious insatiability. He owns more than 40 per cent of British newspaper readership, but he must have more. No major western country has a single media owner as dominant as he. We know how he came by it, by intimidating the Tories into letting him steamroller his way through media monopoly laws. With each new acquisition his power grew more dreadful, the politicians more fearful and the next acquisition all the easier.

Both parties now believe no election can be won without the Sun. Is that true? Who knows, but as long as the politicians believe it, they are unlikely to risk testing the hypothesis. So John Major dates his downfall from the moment Murdoch turned on him, and Tony Blair dates his triumph from the day Murdoch swung behind him. The myth is mighty.

Labour is about to be tested on this and it will be the most important and symbolic trial of its moral probity so far. Labour is drawing up new competition laws, but every indication is that the new law will be carefully framed so as to avoid including Murdoch's monster media empire within its remit. What is the point of a competition policy that doesn't include the media? Who cares about fair competition in selling vacuum cleaners or a level playing field in lawnmowers, if the whole democratic process is subverted by the ability of one over-mighty media mogul to terrify the life out of politicians of all parties?

The Government's weasel argument thus far is that predatory pricing should only be illegal in Britain if practised by a would-be monopolist against the only other competitor in any market. Since there are plainly several newspaper groups competing with Murdoch, the argument goes, there's no competition problem. Now no

This kind of predatory pricing is outlawed in Europe and America

one would suggest that America, wild-west land of the free market, is over-statist or socialist in outlawing predatory pricing: it is an article of free market faith that all competition has to happen on a level playing field.

A delegation from all the non-Murdoch owned press is about to visit Nigel Griffiths, the trade and industry minister responsible for steering through Labour's competition policy. It will be demanding that the newspaper industry is subject to the same competition laws as in every other western nation, and that Murdoch be banned from subsidising his huge loss-making Times operation from his sat-

ellite profits. It is also time to challenge his growing dominance of the new digital television era with tough laws limiting the media ownership of any one player.

Why does it matter? Murdoch has a strong political agenda, driven largely by his commercial interests. He uses his newspapers as a battering ram to intimidate governments into giving him what he wants in other, more important business areas. There is nothing xenophobic in pointing out that both Murdoch and Black, the two leading media opponents of Britain in Europe who have done so much to warp British politics and damage our long-term interests, are both foreigners. But Murdoch will always bend his politics to suit his pocket, happy to throw the BBC off his star satellite when he's reporting threatened his burgeoning business interests in communist China.

Will Blair dare to take on Murdoch? Rarely has a government been in a stronger position to strike and it would have overwhelming support from every other media organisation. So far, there is no sign that it has any such intention. Peter Mandelson's increasingly cozy friendship with Elisabeth Murdoch, the magnate's powerful daughter, is being watched with queasy alarm. Blair sees Murdoch frequently and talks to him on the telephone often.

For Blair so believes in his own incorruptibility that he thinks he can sup with any beast and bring together some grand new coalition that breaks down old barriers in a nation of all the interests, lions and lambs lying down together in his embrace. It is dangerous fantasy. If he doesn't scotch the snake now, he will regret it later, unless he intends to give way to Murdoch every time over the next crucial years when so many key irreversible decisions are still to be taken over regulation of the galloping new broadcasting and telecommunications industry.

Coming up Rosie? Media Guardian

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Bob Scribner

In the van of history

FIRST met the historian Bob Scribner, who has died of cancer aged 56, in his camper van which he had parked near the archive in Ulm, Germany. It was stacked with books for review, letters, card files, and Sainsbury's Red Label tea bags. Each summer he drove that van from archive to archive, he painstakingly worked through the — until then — little used primary source material on early 16th-century Germany.

Scribner brought social history to the study of the German Reformation. Where others sought its origins in Martin Luther's thought, or explained its appeal in terms of ideals of civic unity, Bob asked the simple question: who supported the Reformation? His brief *The German Reformation* set out a new agenda for Reformation studies, and inspired A-level students and graduates alike.

Influenced by anthropology, the work of socialist historian E.P. Thompson and radical history, he showed that the Reformation was a movement which appealed to

craftsfolk, clergy, peasants for very particular reasons and whose success depended on politics. He took on the famous thesis of Max Weber about the connection between protestantism and the rise of secular rational thought, and showed that protestants, far from destroying superstition, developed their own kind of magic. His major study of woodcut propaganda for the Reformation made other historians take pictures seriously, crucially important to understanding a society where 90 per cent of the population was illiterate.

Bob always had an eye for the story that would make the 16th century come to life: the newly "protestant" pastor's wife (his ex-concubine) still dispensing magical cures; the miraculous picture of Luther that refused to burn when the house where the reformer was born went up in flames; the pastor who spent his life campaigning against superstition only to have his congregation try magical prayers for him when he fell ill.

Bob's goal was to write a history of the German Reformation that would present its economic dimension — the sheer financial clout of the big monasteries for instance — understand religion as popular belief, not as the doctrine of religious leaders, and link the history of the Reformation to the early growth of the state. He never completed this book. But in a stream of provocative and original articles over the last 25 years he set out how such a history could be written.



He could hold audiences of schoolchildren and university students spellbound with what he had to say about the Reformation

When, in the 1970s, Bob chose to write his doctorate on the town of Erfurt, then in East Germany, he was one of only two western scholars then working on the Reformation in that country. He engaged with historical debate in Germany when most English-speaking scholars largely ignored German scholarship. He argued and lectured in German, and over the years taught and gave papers in most major German-speaking universities. Raised in a Sydney suburb

by his Catholic grandmother, Bob was part of that generation of left-wing Australian intellectuals, many from Catholic backgrounds, who left Australia for Europe. In his case this was in the 1970s, after his postgraduate degree, when he studied for his PhD at London's Institute of Historical Research. Initially inspired by Erasmian religious ideas, soon he was to be influenced by Marx, Gramsci, Lenin and the History Workshop movement; but he was never a dogmatist.

Bob began teaching at Sydney University. His first British appointment was at Portsmouth Polytechnic and after a brief spell at King's College London he taught for 15 years at Clare College Cambridge. He had just taken up a Harvard professorship when he fell ill.

His work is as well known in German-speaking countries as it is here, and he played a major part in German historiography's recent turn from the history of ideas and towards social history, anthropology, and history from below.

Bob's Australian-ness came out in his strong democratic instincts, his unpretentiousness, and his hatred of hierarchy. He had a rather understated public delivery, but he could hold audiences of schoolchildren and university students spellbound with what he had to say about the Reformation. In so many areas, he was the pioneer: the first to work on the history of crime in early modern Germany, the first to think about women's attitudes to the Reformation, the first to write about ritual and carnival.

He had many more ideas than he was ever able to explore; but then, as he said, he could not see the point of repeating a single idea and heaping up facts to support it. His was that rare imagination that opens up a whole subject, enabling people to see the past with fresh eyes.

He leaves his wife Lois, and their children, Sam and Nell.

Lyndal Rapley

Robert Scribner, historian, born September 6, 1941; died January 26, 1998

Eddie Wainwright

Toiling at two coalfaces

EDDIE Wainwright, who has died aged 85, was for 26 years the MP for Deane Valley. He was warmly respected as a conscientious moderate by all but Scargillites. Although the soul of geniality, he could be prickled. After a few beers he came in hot pursuit of me. I had described him as a "cheer-beery NUM-skull" in my *MP's Chart*. Amiability returned when I apologised for my self-indulgent pun at the expense of his arduous rise from the coalface in a pit village.

After the local council school he had started in Darfield Main Colliery at 14, in 1922. By 25 he was on his National Union of Mineworkers branch committee and by 44 he was on the NUM national executive. This rise was accompanied by further education at Wombwell and Barnsley Technical College and the Workers' Education Association.

He also climbed the parallel political ladder, starting in 1939 with 20 years on Uddington council. In 1961 he became secretary-agent of the Deane Valley Labour Party, and when former miner-cum-Postmaster-General Wilfred Paling retired in 1958, Eddie took his place.

He readily climbed the Commons ladders open to those seeking to improve things for their own people rather than hear the sound of their own voices, taking posts on the miners' group, the trade union group, and the Yorkshire group. In the Commons he pressed constituents' and regional problems, and above all the needs of miners injured, thrown prematurely on the scrapheap or trapped into strikes. His carefully prepared, reasonable requests secured universal respect.

The only time his loyalties led him astray was when Ian Smith's lobbyists, Voice and Vision, craftily invited him and other ex-miners to Rhodesia, where they listened sympathetically to ex-Yorkshire white miners backing the white-supremacist Smith regime.

A moderate miner in the Joe Gormley mould, he was a supporter of fellow-Yorkshire shireman Denis Healey, instead of fighting hopeless Scargill-type battles to keep open condemned pits, Eddie tried to anticipate their closure.

As early as 1969 he urged the importation into Yorkshire and Derbyshire of "labour-intensive large factories" for which ex-miners and other unemployed could be retrained.

On the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries, he



Wainwright... moderate

conducted an 18-month investigation of British Steel, armed with information provided by nearby Sheffield steelworkers. Such parliamentary conscientiousness cut no ice with the new Yorkshire-based Arthur Scargill NUM leadership. Ageing moderates in the five Yorkshire miners' seats were to be replaced by Scargillites. Sponsorship was withdrawn from those over 65. In 1981, when he was 73, Eddie gave in to the pressure of miners' protests, and said he would not stand again. This enabled him to avoid being an MP during the strike of 1984-85.

He is survived by Dorothy (Metcalfe), his wife of 50 years, two sons and two daughters and numerous grandchildren.

Andrew Roth

Edwin Wainwright, miner and politician, born August 12 1908; died January 22 1998

Joe Alioto

Contradiction politics

THE DEATH at 81 of former San Francisco mayor Joe Alioto hastens the departure of an American political era in which corruption and honesty, double-dealing and decency, care for the public and self-enrichment, all dwelt together in apparent ease.

A charismatic man of Sicilian ancestry, Alioto could hold a hall spellbound. His problems began when he withdrew with his cronies to the room at the back. He was favoured as a possible governor of California, a vice-presidential candidate, or even for the White House itself. Instead he broke the law of public life that decrees that if you do wrong, don't look as if you have been caught. To the last, Alioto always denied that he had been found out, but the record was overwhelming.

During his dynamic 1968-76 mayoral term he brought to the bay city its signature structure, the Transamerica pyramid building, criticised as the beginning of "Mammothisation" of one of America's most attractive cities. Yet he also prevented the razing of hundreds of neighbourhood homes.

He gave jobs and political influence to minorities, yet harshly put down a university Vietnam war student protest. Although he was later embroiled in embarrassing legal accusations, he established legislation enabling

suits to be brought against price-fixing, unfair restraint of trade and other monopolistic practices. In the 1960s he represented the Raiders football team in an anti-trust suit against the National League but failed to prevent the team leaving Oakland for Los Angeles.

An amateur violinist, he promoted the city's now famous opera, ballet and symphony orchestra. Yet he was a brash, cigar-chomping wheeler-dealer linked from his lawyer days with dubious big business deals — and to the Mafia.

Fresh from his unexpected first mayoral victory, Alioto gave the 1988 nomination speech for Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey, and was pushed by his California delegation as a possible vice-presidential candidate.

Less than one year later Look magazine linked Alioto to "a web of alliances with at least six members of La Cosa Nostra". Alioto filed a \$12 million writ, and 11 years and four trials later accepted a \$350,000 settlement, a moral defeat that he never acknowledged.

But gone for ever were his national aspirations. After the Look article he carried on as student what he called a "kind of New Deal coalition of labour and minorities, plus flag-waving Italians". Almost immediately he was struck by

a Washington State indictment for finagling legal fees and taking kick-backs, forcing him to drop a challenge to California governor Ronald Reagan. Twice Alioto evaded formal charges or penalties, having appeared before the California state Bar accused of taking \$5 million in fees from a \$9 million settlement, and for mishandling a client's funds.

As a passionate Italian paterfamilias he fathered six sons and two daughters, four of whom became lawyers. But in the latter years of his life he split acrimoniously with two sons and got a writ from his grand-daughter, Michela. She sought to recover a \$1.6 million trust fund she won for ski injuries. She had loaned the money to Alioto's law firm, which was by then in money trouble. Involved in turbulence to the end, Alioto nearly lost his fashionable Pacific Heights mansion to the Inland Revenue over back taxes in 1993.

One daughter, the lawyer Angela, became a dazzling San Francisco city councillor and chairwoman for eight years, and Michela ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1996 from her wheelchair.

Christopher Reed

Joseph Lawrence Alioto, politician and lawyer, born February 12, 1916, died January 29, 1998



City father... Mayor Alioto with his second wife Kathleen, and baby, in 1979

Pat Hanlon

Freewheeling days on the open road



Pat Hanlon... she kept a wheel jig in the bedroom

IN THE 1930s Pat Hanlon, who has died aged 82, escaped from home in Somerset to London. There she worked in service, then as a Lyons Corner House "lippy" as maid, thus saving enough to buy a bicycle.

Then she joined cycling clubs, the Sunbury "Wasps", later the Rickmansworth, the Actonia and the Clarion — although their left politics didn't interest her — so that she could ride to Somerset and the Lake District, and go racing and touring every weekend. Four hundred miles in two days was nothing to Pat, in those days of open roads with networks of cy-

clists' cafes — an alternative lifestyle in cycling shorts.

Pat wanted to know more about bike-building so she joined a Camden Town evening class and just before the war began a Saturday job at Macleary's cycle shop, in Islington. Watching the wheel builder, she decided she could do the same and so taught herself. Eventually she joined the staff at Macleary's and stayed there for 18 years.

She faced out the prejudice that a woman bike mechanic encountered and thus, in 1959, opened her first shop. She was to have three shops in north London to which customers came from around the

world to buy her wheels. Having served behind the counter all day, she would stay up after midnight building wheels, and bicycles as well, loving what she made and wanting the best for the people who respected what she loved. She became a legend.

She was a publican's daughter, born Prissie Jane Howells and grew up in Wales with Welsh as her first language. When she was 10 the family moved to Somerset, and she learned to ride, and fix, her father's bike; and so began her lifelong passion for cycling and bicycles.

Pat was no mean competi-

tor. Her one hour four minutes for 25 miles in the early 1940s is still recalled and she'd only dropped a few seconds on that record a decade later, when she was in her mid-thirties. In retirement she divided her time between her home in Dagenham — where she kept a wheel jig in a bedroom so that she could still turn a wheel for a friend — her beloved Majorca and the Comrades Cycling Club near Bishop's Cleeve, of which she was president for 35 years.

She was married twice. Her first husband was Frank Hanlon, from whom she was divorced; she later married "Nobby" Clarke. She is survived by one son, from her first marriage.

Joanne Bonnet

Pat Clarke, cyclist, born April 11, 1915; died December 29, 1997

Birthdays

Louise Badger, manager, BBC Symphony Orchestra, 57; Christie Brinkley, supermodel, 44; Andrew Davis, conductor, 54; Lord (John) Eatwell, Labour economic adviser, 53; Abba Eban, Israeli statesman, 83; Farrah Fawcett, actress, 51; Dr Tony Blair, economist, 47; Sir Norman Fowler MP, former Conservative minister, 60; David Jason, actor, 58; David Jones, chief executive, Next, 55; Sir Chips Keswick, chairman, Hambros Bank, 58;

Barry McGuigan, boxer, 37; Dame Alex Meynell, former senior civil servant, 65; David Newton, jazz pianist, composer, 40; Prof Sue Richards, prof of public management, Birmingham University, 50; Brid Rodgers, SDLP spokesperson on women's issues, 53; Elaine Stritch, actress and singer, 71.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

AN ARTICLE headed, Birds on a wire, G2 Page 19, January 29, contained the following: "...birds left in the nets for long fade fast in climatic extremes". It should have said climatic. In the same piece the Ixterine warbler was misspelt.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 236 8589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 236 9697. E-mail: readers@guardian.co.uk

Death Notices

BATCHLOR, Basil George, Lieutenant Commander, RN, retired, died peacefully on 28th January at home in Farnley, South Lincolnshire, aged 84. He was survived by his wife, Joan, and daughter, Helen, and three sons, Andrew and grandchildren, Liam and Christopher. Cremated at Southport Crematorium, 11.10 am, Thursday, San February 1998. No flowers. Donations to Roy Castle Fund.

To place your announcement, telephone 0171 713 4667 or fax 0171 713 4129 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.

Jackdaw



Suits you

WHO, now, can tie a bow tie, even though it is the exact same knot used for shoe laces? (Who exactly is tying these men's shoes?) Suit wearers make a dozen aesthetic decisions before breakfast. This is not a problem: good taste eventually becomes second nature. But today's male office workers lack the stomach for unfamiliar risks. Instead, they reduce clothes to commodities, and then make judgments based on statistics rather than on taste. Offices are full of denim bibles, able to discuss relative differences in slab or selvedge and totally

incapable of telling whether a pair of blue cotton serge five-pocket trousers flatters them or not. And even these bibles are better than the type Harvey Nichols currently attracts, the ones who examine the boxes of Calvin Klein underwear, just to find out how much less they paid in New York last year.

Humans are one of the few species where the male is dowdier than the female. The condition is so ubiquitous that it seems natural. It isn't. Anyone who finds men sexually attractive still prefers that they are handsome and capable. The apparent death of the Peacock Principle is due solely to the laddish fear of office politics. Now men dress to reassure other men that they do not wish to either seduce them or to fuck them over. They want to seem unthreatening, dressed in playboy clothes, sporting silhouette of a Teletubby — anything just so long as they keep the office atmosphere as free of tension as possible. The Modern Review gets inside the suit.

Sci-Algebra

THE design department for Star Trek: Voyager on the Paramount lot in Los Angeles is shockingly small. Tucked away at the end of a row of narrow first-floor offices in a long, two-storey block which looks like it may have been erected as a temporary affair, some time in the thirties, it comprises a studio of four or four knocked through rooms, with the dressing room-sized office of department head Richard James tacked on at the end. And in this age of computer aided design and CGI, it's surprising to see the team still hard at work with pens and pencils, scribbling away on lined pieces of paper resting on larger art boards.

The atmosphere is surprisingly calm considering the story currently in production is, as James puts it, "A bit of a logistics nightmare. We've been doing second unit work two or three days a week. Which means two of four stages are tied up, and we're trying to build at the same time they're doing second

unit work which shuts down our work." There's a simple equation when it comes to being a production designer on an episodic science fiction, it seems: (I+A/T+M) x SF2 = H, where I=Imagination, A=Ambition, T=Time, M=Money, SF=genre more demanding than any other and H=Hectic. SF2 gives us the science fiction formula.

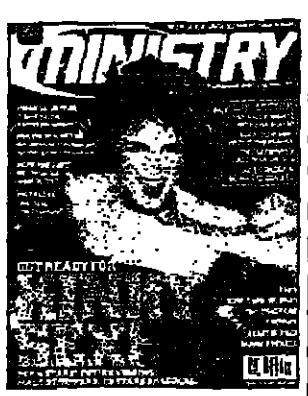
Feet first

MOST of us wouldn't be seen dead without a pair of trainer tappers, but a pair of ladyfets squeezed into towering stilettos does the trick for loads of men. Based on the dominance thing, blokes lie down and get trampled by one or more sharp-beeled girls, then go for the toe-sucking Fergie routine. More extreme foot fetishists pay up to \$20 for photos of tempting tootsies. Others are after so-called pedal pumpers: women who drive cars around starlings, then take pictures of their feet on the clutch (we said clutch). One enthusiast on

the Internet even begs for information on "naked women and your car breaking down, or times that you were stuck in the mud." Adding, "I'm not looking to get disgusting with you, just enjoying the words and using my imagination." Yeah, right. Ministry magazine.

Logocentric

GRAPHIC design is easily the most ubiquitous of all the



Ministry... walk on by

arts. It is everywhere, touching everything we do, everything we see, everything we buy on billboards and in Bibles, on taxi receipts and on web sites, on birth certificates and on gift certificates, on the folded circulars tucked inside jars of aspirin and on the thick pages of children's chubby board books. It is in the boldly directional arrows on street signs and the blurred frenetic typography on the title sequence to ER. The New Republic.

Monica's mates

"WE AT TIME magazine would have preferred to call you about this matter, and where possible we have tried to find your number but without success. As you've no doubt heard by now, an explosive story about your schoolmate, Monica Lewinsky, has suddenly erupted in Washington. We are trying to put together the most rounded, most informative and fairest piece possible about Monica, and we are looking for people who know or knew her who

Hannah Pool

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171 713 4366; write to Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Tomorrow: A fra

SmithKline m

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Standard Chemistry

Standard Chemistry

maker jobs threat

Glaxo SmithKline merger

Advisers line up for £100m

Dan Atkinson

CITY advisers are lining up for a record £100 million in fees for arranging the proposed merger of drug groups Glaxo and SmithKline Beecham, it emerged yesterday.

"This will be the biggest ever pay-day for the City of London... It's going to be a bankers' and lawyers' paradise," Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly* magazine, told *Bloomberg*.

The £100 billion deal to create the world's third largest corporation will smash the British record for merger activity in a year — \$64 billion, set in 1997.

Should the deal become tangled up in regulatory knots on both sides of the Atlantic, charges for legal and financial advice could spiral as high as \$500 million, said Mr Healey.

Britain's Lazard Brothers is Glaxo's main adviser, with SmithKline Beecham being advised chiefly by Wall Street firm Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter, Discover.

Shares in other drug companies are expected to soar today as investors try to cash in on the next merger round.

Germany's Hoechst, owner of drugs group Hoechst Marion Roussel, said: "If the concentration process continues, then all industry participants will have to rethink their positioning."

Other European firms in the frame include Zeneca, Astra, Sanofi, and Boehringer Ingelheim, as well as chemical companies with major drug operations such as Hoechst, Rhône-Poulenc, Bayer and Alko Nobel.

Union leaders yesterday called for the Government to block the deal, and warned it could shrink the country's science base and damage the hub of British pharmaceutical expertise. Suggestions by the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union that virtually half the 21,000 combined UK workforce could lose their jobs, were dismissed as "pure speculation" by both Glaxo and SmithKline Beecham.

Already at least 2,464 jobs have been lost in the sector since the mid-1990s, largely as a result of takeovers and

Compound interests

Where the main jobs are

Glaxo Wellcome

Barnard Castle, Durham (manufacturing)
Speke, Merseyside (manufacturing)
Ware, Herts (R&D, manufacturing)
Stevenage, Herts (R&D)
Dartford, Kent (manufacturing)
Greenford, West London (R&D, headquarters)

SmithKline Beecham

Irvine, Ayrshire (manufacturing)
Welwyn Garden City, Herts (administration)
Harlow, Essex (R&D)
Weybridge, Surrey (R&D)
Brentford, Middlesex (headquarters)
Maidenhead, Berkshire (laboratories)
Slough, Berks (manufacturing)
Maidenhead, Berks (manufacturing)
Tonbridge, Kent (manufacturing)

Top ten companies

- 1 General Electric US \$120bn
- 2 Royal Dutch/Shell US \$100bn
- 3 Glaxo Wellcome/SmithKline Beecham UK £100bn
- 4 Amgen US \$80bn
- 5 Pfizer US \$75bn
- 6 Merck US \$75bn
- 7 Eli Lilly US \$70bn
- 8 Novartis US \$65bn
- 9 AstraZeneca UK £50bn
- 10 Sanofi-Sintelabo UK £45bn

Best selling drugs

- 1 Zantac (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 2 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 3 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 4 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 5 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 6 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 7 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 8 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 9 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)
- 10 Zovirax (Glaxo Wellcome)

mergers. Of these, the lion's share — 1,700 — was lost when Glaxo took over Wellcome in 1995. Worldwide, 7,500 jobs were axed in Glaxo Wellcome, a quarter of them in research and development.

The MSP — the leading industry organisation — said it would lobby the British authorities and the European Commission. General secretary Roger Lyons said: "The main victims will be employees and consumers. Our concern is that the only advantage of the deal is in cutting costs by shedding jobs."

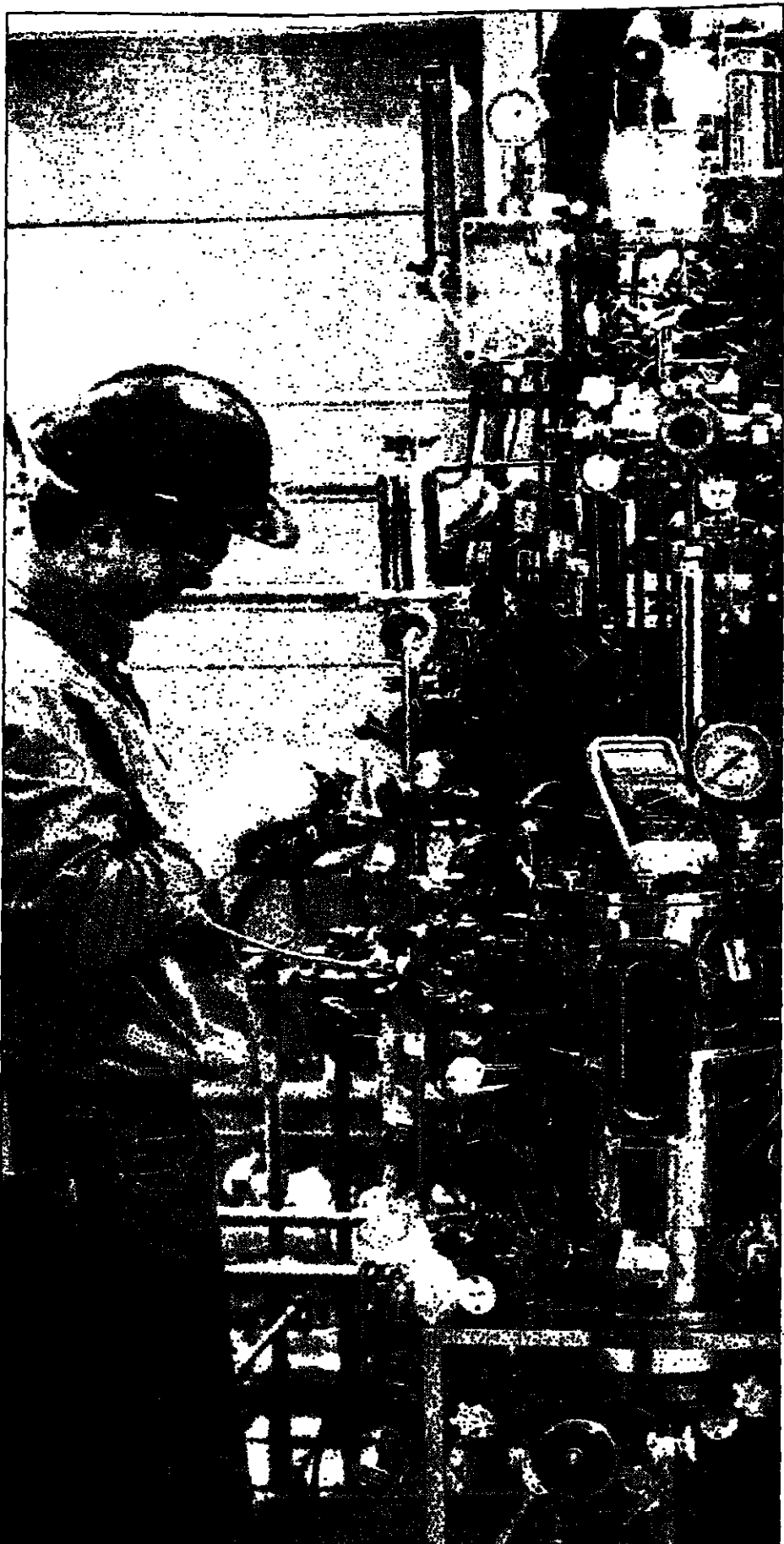
"This is an anticompetitive move that will not help employees or consumers, will not improve health care and will have a significant effect on science employment. These companies are the biggest employer of scientific graduate labour in the UK. We don't see how it will help increase our scientific base."

Because the two pharmaceutical companies overlap in relatively few areas — Glaxo is a leader in products fight-

ing ulcers, asthma and migraine, while SmithKline's strengths lie in antibiotics, vaccines and health care — a source close to Glaxo suggested that there would be relatively little scope for any job cuts, although he conceded that head office personnel could be vulnerable.

One senior analyst questioned whether the deal made sense if cost-cutting was limited. He said both groups had pruned mercilessly following earlier mergers, and added: "It makes you wonder if there is a law of diminishing returns. Can you keep taking out 10 per cent of the cost base? If you can't, then what's the point of doing it?"

"Maybe the two firms have looked to the future and seen something they didn't like — perhaps a slow-down in the US, the key driver for current industry prosperity, or in Glaxo's case, a worse than expected downturn in sales of Zantac, the off-patent ulcer drug on which it built its global status."



Unions say the loss of jobs like this engineer's, building a lab at Stevenage, will follow the merger and eventually affect the industry's scientific base. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

Economics Notebook

Time for Labour to get on track



Victor Keegan

THE Government's treatment of nurses' and teachers' pay is beginning to make New Labour look like Thatcherism without the human face. Mrs Thatcher, of course, hated the public sector so her behaviour was at least predictable. But for Labour to override the specific request of the review board that its latest award (for the umpteenth time well under the private sector norms) be paid in full, takes some swallowing; not least because in both cases there is a looming shortage of new recruits. Even the Conservatives, who often postponed such rises, would not have dared this time to go against the wishes of the review body. And if they had, the Opposition would have been rightly vengeful.

That announcement coincided with another one which reflected the perverseness of public sector policy from the other end of the scale. Why is it Britain hasn't got the decision-making mechanism to build a 70-mile stretch of railway from London to the Channel tunnel at Folkestone, a project that has been postponed for over a decade and which could have been up and running — and quite likely profitable — had it been built when the Channel tunnel was agreed?

Britain invented railways — yet now seems to be spending an inordinate amount of time not building them. George Stephenson started it all in 1825 with his *Sophia* Rocket which went so fast that one contemporary said it was like flying and it was "impossible to divest yourself of the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident happening". In fact, only two of the 5 million passengers carried by the Liverpool and Manchester railway in its first decade lost their lives.

DURING this "railway mania" hugely profitable lines were built (until the bubble burst in 1847). Britain went on to conquer the world. We built them in India, South America and Canada. China's first railway was privately built by British engineers. The first trains in Japan were driven by British drivers and in 1877, 120 British advisers were working for the Japanese Railway Administration. Thomas Brassey took 5,000 British navvies to France for the Paris to Rouen link, an act of labour mobility that EMU can only dream about. (All this is from Nicolas Pothol's fascinating book, *The World of the Railways*, Pimlico, £12.50.)

Nowadays the French have shown us a clear pair of heels by building TGV fast links all over the country. Maybe they could be persuaded to take over our project. Japan has constructed a test track for its

magnetic levitation train, a technology that Britain pioneered then abandoned.

In Victorian times, companies could make a high return on capital by building railways. Nowadays, it is not possible because of fierce competition from cars, coaches and aircraft and because environmental factors (like building a tunnel under east London) make it impossible to make a 20 per cent return in the first few years.

It is ludicrous that a project with a life of over 100 years (with benefits increasing as the years go on) should be dependent on a high return in the first few years — but that's because of that unfortunate Thatcherite legacy, the Channel Tunnel Factor.

She insisted it should be built by the private sector. It was — but only because it coincided with a brief period when syndicated loans particularly from Japan were available. That, together with a concerted effort to cajole the banks into helping the national effort, secured the funds.

THE tunnel was a huge engineering success but it was technically bankrupt when finished and ensured that the private sector would never again put up the money for a similar project. Mention of the Channel tunnel was quietly dropped from Lady Thatcher's memoirs.

Even when the Conservatives relented and threw in subsidies amounting to half the project cost, the consortium still couldn't do it profitably. *Eastlink* is now looking at it but I will be amazed if they can create short-term profits for shareholders unless they are given yet more subsidies (like higher fares on existing lines). I don't care who does it as long as the damned thing gets built.

If all else fails, the Government should borrow the money (during a period when its finances are running into a surplus) in order to fund a railway with a 100-year life which will bring Britain closer to Europe, release congestion on other routes, help connected regions to the Continent and make more business from the gas guzzling airlines.

What is unacceptable is for the taxpayer to fund all the risks and the private sector to cream off the profits. John Prescott has shown robustness but this doesn't mean he will be able to persuade a Chancellor who delays nurses' pay to cough up for a railway that refuses to be built.

In opposition, Labour castigated the Conservatives for their neglect of the nation's infrastructure. This is a test case for Labour. It is no good trying to get in on the fast track to European monetary union if we're too slow to get to where the rest of Europe begins.

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Pharmaceutical marriage made in Darwin's image

Dan Atkinson ponders the chemistry of partnership in planned deal

FOR Sir Richard Sykes, 55-year-old chairman of Glaxo Wellcome, the planned merger with SmithKline Beecham may well be yet another work-in-example of the Darwinian evolutionary theory in which he is a strong believer.

But his partner in this enterprise, SmithKline's

chief executive, Jan Leschly, had no doubts that survival of the fittest necessitated the merger. The two companies, he said, did not have to emerge from great pharmaceutical combines.

All such doubts would seem now to have been banished, and there is much talk that the relationship

between the two men is good.

The fact that the disposition of the top jobs in the enlarged group, often the trickiest elements of merger talks, has been worked out appears to support this view.

If all goes to plan, the two men, Sir Richard the academic and Mr Leschly the marketer, will shift from their present positions with their respective companies to identical posts at the top of the new group.

The bond between the two goes back to the days when both worked for the US drug company Squibb. But each had reached the crossing point in their lives by very different routes.

Life for Richard Sykes began on the West Riding smallholding owned by his carpenter father. Work in the local hospital's pathology lab was followed by a degree in microbiology from London and an early job with Glaxo in charge of antibiotic research.

Meanwhile, Mr Leschly was appearing in 16 Wimbledon tournaments and studying pharmacy and business in his native Denmark. He started work for a Danish pharmaceutical company the same year Sir Richard joined Glaxo in 1972.

In the years after Squibb, Sir Richard returned to Glaxo to head research and development, and made his mark with the bid for Wellcome. Mr Leschly, meanwhile, had joined the newly created SmithKline Bee-

cham, taking the top job in 1994.

Trevor Jones, director of the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries, said: "The chemistry is there... They are different in character, but I see them as complementary."

Others are not so sure. There is already talk of friction. Even in the world's third biggest company, there may not be room for them both. Darwin, no doubt, would have understood.

Carmaker jobs under threat

David Gow
Industrial Editor

HUNDREDS of thousands of workers in the European car and auto-components sectors are set to lose their jobs over the next few years because of chronic overcapacity, stagnant demand and cheap imports, says a report published today.

The European Metalworkers Federation, grouping all unions in the two industries, has warned of a series of plant closures similar to that at Villvoerde, Belgium, last year, when Renault sacked more than 3,000 people after receiving substantial state aid to set up its plant.

An EMF conference this week, attended by representatives from car manufacturers and the European Commission, will be told that the next crisis in sales and profits will occur in 2000.

The EMF says that between 1992 and 1995 nearly 200,000 jobs were lost in the vehicle and body-assembly sector in

Europe as employers reacted to increased competition by cutting costs as well as increasing capacity. The industry employs 5 million people directly and indirectly.

Governments exacerbated this crisis by granting competitive subsidies for inward investment by manufacturers.

"Economic expansion will go hand in hand with a decline in the size of the work force."

"If car manufacturers stick to their conservative instincts — price wars, insistence on lean production, more job cuts, pressure on car components and new capacities coming on stream, which intensifies the excess-capacity problem — the European car industry runs the risk of being caught in a vicious circle."

The group recommends fiscal incentives for environment-friendly cars, changes in aid and limits on state aid to give priority to employment and measures to promote a European "car of the future".

City gets US firms' transatlantic drift

Larry Elliott in Davos

WALL Street's biggest finance houses are moving chunks of their business to London to escape from New York's regulatory regime, it has been revealed.

One of America's largest institutions decided to move operations to the City after completing an extensive, year-long study of 50 financial centres.

"I started out against moving any more of our operations to London," said one executive at the World Economic Forum. "But after running everything through a

special computer model, there was really no choice."

"We have moved a significant amount of business to the City because the structure of regulation makes a lot of sense. It looks at regulation in a market way, rather than in a 1930s way."

He added that Britain's decision not to join the single currency from the outset had not mattered. London had easily outsourced Frankfurt and Paris and had also beaten off the challenge from offshore centres.

America's financial regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission, is so concerned by the drift of business across the Atlantic that

it is drawing up proposals to amend rules dating back to the Depression of the 1930s.

In particular, the SEC is trying to find out whether it would be more sensible to regulate a firm's risk in each of its sectors, rather than on an overall basis.

Howard Lutnick, president and chief executive officer of Cantor Fitzgerald, the largest broker of American securities, said that London could be damaged if Britain stayed out of the single currency.

Mr Lutnick said that the euro had the potential to rival the dollar as a benchmark currency — if and when it developed an integrated capital fixed-income market. In the

event that Frankfurt or Paris developed a liquid 10-year benchmark bond, it would become Europe's prime financial centre.

With horse-trading continuing here over the presidency of the European Central Bank Jacques Santer, the president of the European Commission, and Philippe Maystadt, Belgium's finance minister, maintained the concerted pressure from Brussels for the Government to sign up to monetary union.

Attempts to broker a compromise between Dutch front-runner Wim Duisenberg and his French rival, Jean-Claude Trichet, appeared to have failed last night.

Energy Group bidders prepare their break-up strategies

Colin Watson and Simon Davis

POTENTIAL bidders for the Energy Group, owner of Eastern Electricity, are preparing for a three-way takeover battle this week.

It is understood that Guy

Hands, Nomura International's £40 million-a-year star corporate financier, is in Tokyo talking to parent company Nomura Securities about a possible bid and that senior Texas Utilities executives have been in London scrutinising Energy Group corporate finance documents.

Nomura is expected to break up Energy Group if it gains control and float off its Eastern Electricity and US Peabody coal assets as separate companies.

Texas Utilities reportedly has also held talks about selling Peabody to the investment bank Lehman Brothers

for £1 billion if it wins the contest.

A UK trade union delegation is due in Washington this month to meet unions representing 220,000 US utilities workers and to discuss safeguarding workers' and consumers' interests in the electricity supply industry.

Granada chief will defy critics

This week

Lisa Buckingham

GERRY Robinson and boardroom colleagues at Granada, the media and hotels group, will braven out a shareholder revolt at Wednesday's annual meeting over plans to buy out part of their service contracts.

Source: close to the company said the directors are determined to stick with plans to pay themselves two months' money in return for reducing their contract term from three years to two.

The showdown between directors and some of the group's big shareholders comes less than a week after

corporate governance guidelines produced by Sir Ronnie Hampel's committee advocated shorter service contracts.

Sir Ronnie suggested executives should volunteer to cut their notice periods from three years to two.

Granada has paid its directors a total of £375,000 to persuade them to cut their contracts. That figure includes £110,000 for chief executive, Charles Allen and £135,354 for Mr Robinson, the chairman. Investors' descriptions of the payments as "distasteful" and "inappropriate" will embarrass Mr Robinson as he prepares to take on chairman-ship of the Arts Council.

Mr Robinson is also said to be close to relinquishing his position as chairman of BskyB.

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Belgium 60.18	Greece 463.75	Netherlands 3.27	Spain 246.12
Canada 2.34	Hong Kong 12.32	New Zealand 2.77	Sweden 13.05
Cyprus 0.857	India 83.45	Norway 12.15	Switzerland 124
Denmark 11.18	Ireland 1.18	Portugal 228.49	Turkey 340.740
Finland 8.91	Israel 5.88	Saudi Arabia 6.04	USA 1.60

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Europe's rugby champions face a battle on the home front



Callard brings down the curtain and the audience goes wild... Bath's recalled full-back puts over his winning penalty at Stade Lescure and West Country supporters in the 38,000 crowd erupt as much with relief as joy PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID ROGERS

Heineken European Cup final: Brive 18, Bath 19

Bath blast a hole in Euro boycott

Robert Armstrong finds last-ditch triumph in Bordeaux overshadowed by political strife

THE sheer size of Bath's achievement in winning the Heineken European Cup on French soil is in danger of being overshadowed by a bitter political row over the future of the competition that could make the momentous events here at Stade Lescure on Saturday appear, in comparison, more like an English garden party.

Ranged against each other, tooth and claw at the ready, are the leading English clubs, who want to shape Europe in their own image, and the increasingly isolated Rugby Football Union, who have very different ideas.

Bath, the first British side to wear the European crown, are naturally determined to defend the title in next season's tournament, even though the English clubs have formally withdrawn. As the consequences of their stunning victory over the holders dawned on the RFU's would-be movers and shakers, it became clear that Bath will have no truck

with Fran Cotton's attempt to resurrect the antediluvian divisional sides under a new name for entry into Europe.

So often the trendsetters in the English game, Bath at a stroke have blown a huge hole in Twickenham's European strategy as well as unexpectedly reviving their own season. The support of the paying public now looks certain to swing firmly behind a club-based competition that gives Bath and other top English sides further opportunities to be No. 1 in Europe. It is imperative that the clubs get their act together quickly under the umbrella of English Rugby Partnership (ERP) and start calling the shots in the corridors of power.

Twickenham's attempt to step into the breach with representative teams, staffed exclusively by England-qualified players, is in effect a thinly-veiled form of ethnic cleansing designed to push out Celts, Frenchmen and southern-hemisphere stars who have done so much to give the Pre-

mier league greater competitive credibility. Bath's latest triumph, it should be noted, was gained with Scots, Welshman and an American in their line-up, in addition to eight England internationals.

Bath, who have always adopted a pluralist approach to recruitment, believe the cause of English rugby will be helped by a healthy blend of overseas players and home-grown talent: there is plenty of evidence that other clubs, such as Leicester, Northampton and Saracens, support that view.

"We are going to enjoy being European champions," declared Robinson. "It is now up to the people off the field to sort out the politics. If you win something, you want to win it again the following year. The clubs are at the heart of our tradition, our history — just look at the fantastic atmosphere Bath and Brive generated together in Bordeaux. No one can deny the success of the European club concept."

Jonathan Callard, who has been dropped and recalled by Bath more times than he can remember, said the knock-out effect of winning the cup would be felt throughout English rugby. "It's good for

the sport that an English club won it; obviously it would be a blow if we were unable to take part in next season's competition. If it's going to remain a meaningful competition it has to continue in club form. I think the whole tournament has been magnificent. Its success speaks for itself."

While it is true the final could have benefited from more than one try, scored by Callard, and fewer errors, no one could fail to be gripped by the suspense and sheer intensity of a contest poised on a knife-edge. Pretty it wasn't stomach-churning certainly.

When Brive led 9-0, 12-3,

and then 15-6 before half-time it seemed their supercool goal-kicker Christophe Lamaison might settle the outcome on his own initiative. Certainly Brive were living dangerously, relying on the referee Jim Fleming's decision to deny a possible try by Olivier Magne and later a desperate ankle tap by Iwan Evans to stop Sebastian Carrat breaking clear on the left flank. In every sense Brive deserved to be ahead.

Nevertheless Bath, despite a strange lack of organisation in crucial areas, competed tenaciously in the rucks and mauls, denying Brive the quick early ball they craved

and driving round the fringes with enough vigour to set up guerrilla attacks down the flanks. The turning point came early in the second half when Brive failed to get any change from six successive scrums on the Bath line and their tight-head prop Richard Crespy limped off, damaged more mentally than physically.

"If Brive had scored a try at that stage we would not have come back," admitted Robinson. "They put us under a lot of pressure and they also defended well and stopped us playing when we tried to get going. I was thinking of bringing on Matt Perry and Fred

Mendez as substitutes. Still, our attitude was very impressive — we wanted to be winners, just as we've always done during the past 15 years."

Once Callard had scored his 56th-minute try, thanks to solid close-quarter work by Dan Lyle and a sweet pass by Jeremy Guscott, Bath rapidly gained momentum and, with it, the lion's share of control. Even then a splendid drop goal by Alain Penaud gave Brive an 18-13 lead, which Callard swiftly cut back to two points with his third penalty goal. Then Yann Manhes, in a moment of madness, stuck an elbow in the face of Adeyayo

Adeyayo and Callard, cool as you like, steered home the winning penalty, two minutes into time added on.

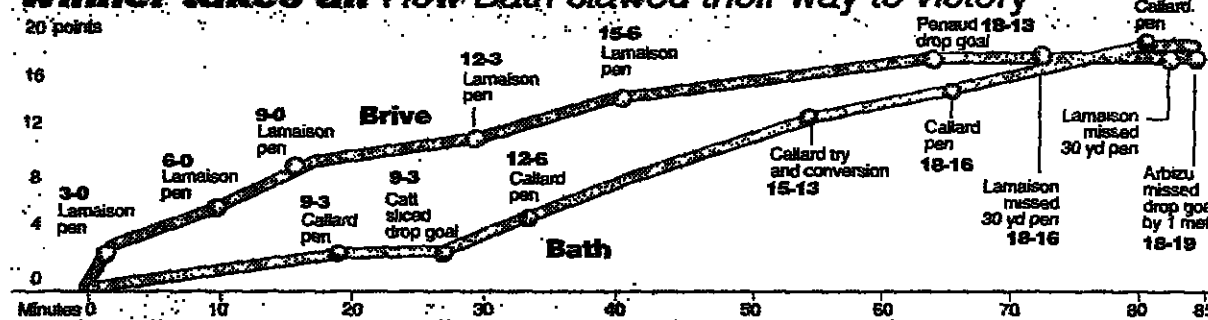
Brive could have stolen it even then when first Lamaison was wide with a penalty and then the fly-half Lisandro Arbizu's drop kick suffered the same fate with five extra minutes played.

As Bath's Scottish captain Andy Nicol remarked: "It was a very physical match but our mental attitude was as good as the physical side; that's why I had a strong belief we could win even when we were nine points down. We played simple rugby, but we played it at pace."

Colomiers recorded the biggest win in the club's history yesterday when they thrashed French rivals Agen 43-5 in Toulouse in the European Conference final.

SCORERS: Bath: Try: Callard, 56; Conversion: Callard, 18; Penalties: Callard, 4; Brive: Penalties: Lamaison 5; Drop goal: Penaud. **BATH:** Callard, Evans, De Gennville, Guscott, Adeyayo; Carrat (capt), Hilton, Regan (Menez, 72min), Ugoag, Alag, Peden, Thomas (Sarreau, 70), Webster, Lyle. **BRIVE:** Penaud, Carrat, Lamaison, Vendin, S. Carrat (Vieux, 73), Arbizu, Carmones, Casado, Travers, Crespy (Laperne, 49), Alag, Manhes, Van der Linden, Magne, Duboussat (Somme, 70). **Referee:** J. Fleming (Scotland).

Winner takes all How Bath clawed their way to victory



Tennis: The Australian Open

Korda serves up the punchline

Stephen Bierley in Melbourne sees the Czech capture his first Grand Slam title

BACK in Communist times there was a joke that Czechoslovakia had the largest cow in the world because its head was in Prague and its tail was in Moscow. And in tennis it had the tallest player in the world because Petr Korda's head was perpetually in the clouds while his feet were forever sinking in the quagmire.

Czechoslovakia has gone, and so have the jokes at the expense of the old Soviet Union's expense, but until yesterday Korda's name was still prone to the sly dig or ungenerous innuendo. He had, after all, a long record of underachievement. OK, I missed a couple of shots but that was because of an unlucky bounce and me wanting to be positive."

What had been somewhat be positive and aggressive. "It was as if all the pieces of the mosaic came together."

Whatever Korda might have been thinking his supporters were put through the wringer in his opening service game. Two glorious passes on both forehand and backhand were followed by a wild smash (a good metre out), a forehand error, and a double-fault. Rios had break-point, and the Korda contingent could barely watch.

If only they could have tapped into his mind they would not of fretted in the least. "I was not at all nervous. OK, I missed a couple of shots but that was because of an unlucky bounce and me wanting to be positive."

What had been somewhat

overlooked in the equation was that Rios, eight years younger than Korda, has also been prone to collapse in a heap at critical times. Korda had lost the French Open final to Jim Courier in 1992, but Rios had not gone beyond the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam before.

Chile, which hangs down the west coast of South America like a twisted net cord, is long on geography but short on tennis history. Rios frequently speaks of his homeland as being thousands of miles from anywhere, so perhaps he feels at home in Australia which has similar hang-ups concerning its isolation.

He is not a readily likeable man, even to his fellow countrymen. During the past year, spurred by a large contract with Nike, he has attempted to be a little more civil. But he continues to alienate more than he befriends.

However he is extremely gifted and from the back of the court can conjure angles and release a depth of shot that can overwhelm all but the best. On this occasion this ability deserted him.

"I felt tired and mis-hit too many balls. I think your body relaxes a bit after a semi-final, and then you have to force it." As Rios forced, and missed, so his confidence dwindled. By the third set he appeared to shrink.

Korda believed the key was his serve. Indeed he lost it once, while Rios was able to hold his serve five times out of 12. "I knew I was a better fighter, and I knew he sometimes gives up," said Korda, who at the end sank to his knees in a position of prayer, rather as Bjorn Borg used to.

Later came the scissor-kicks, a cartwheel, and a rush into the crowd to embrace his wife, Regina, and to lift his

daughter, Jessica. And later still he paid a moving tribute to his father, Petr — "the man who put tennis in my hands".

This morning Korda will wake up A\$615,000 (£267,500) richer, and ranked 17th behind Sampras. He will also wake up as a Grand Slam winner — at last a true reflection of his talents.

One winner the world may see a little less of this year is Martina Hingis. The 17-year-old Czech-born Swiss, who on Saturday retained the women's title with a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Spain's Conchita Martinez, intends to cut her schedule, and spend a more time riding her horses.

Yesterday she flew to Tokyo for the \$926,250 (£368,000) Toray Pan Pacific Open, but after that there will be no more tennis until March when she will compete again at Indian Wells and Key Biscayne.

"I was really tired at the end of last year and played just too much. I always knew that this year the expectations and pressures would be greater so I need to regulate the tournaments a little more carefully," Hingis said.

"Last year nobody expected me to win. But this year everybody expects me to. It was so much harder to defend a title than get it the first time."

Hingis's natural exuberance continues to shine through when she is relaxed, but there was no doubting the careworn edge to much of her play in those championships. Quite frankly, Saturday's final was a slog.

Martinez, who won Wimbledon as a 22-year-old in 1994, had enough experience and guile to make it difficult for Hingis, but if the champion had been at the peak of her form and fitness she would have cut the Spaniard down in half the time.



Breakthrough... Petr Korda after forcing a straight-sets win over Marcelo Rios GREG WOOD

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(0) 3	Aston Villa	(0) 0
(0) 0	Newcastle United	(0) 1

Bolton Wanderers (1) 1 **Chelsea** (1) 2
Coventry City (1) 5 **Barnsley** (0) 0

Crystal Palace (0) 0 **Derby County** (1) 2
Leeds United (2) 2 **Tottenham Hotspur** (0) 1

Liverpool (0) 0 **Manchester United** (0) 0
Blackburn Rovers (0) 0 **Leicester City** (1) 1

Sheffield Wed (1) 1 **West Ham United** (1) 2
Vimbleton (1) 1 **Everton** (1) 2

Referee	Games	Yell	Red	Avg
Games	2	4.82		
Kodoshian	12	37	0	3.08
Willsie	14	43	2	3.07
Harvey	12	38	1	2.60
Ashby	15	39	2	3.00
Siverton	40,112	29,539	34,786	
Leads	39,852	29,076	34,612	
Chase	34,600	30,008	33,538	
Darby	30,222	25,625	28,603	
Waters	26,000	22,000	22,000	

100

	Home										Away										GO	Pts	Forthcoming fixtures
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GO	Pts	Forthcoming fixtures									
Man Utd	24	10	1	1	32	5	5	3	4	19	13	33	49	7.2 Bolton (h); 2.4 Derby (h); 2.2 Newcastle (a); 2.2 Bournemouth (a); 2.2 Arsenal (a); 2.2 Tottenham (a); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a); 2.2 Man Utd (a); 2.2 Aston Villa (h).									
Chelsea	24	8	2	1	22	8	6	1	6	30	17	27	45	8.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Leicester (h); 2.2 Man Utd (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Aston Villa (h).									
Blackburn	24	8	3	1	30	12	4	6	2	14	12	20	45	7.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Southampton (h); 2.2 Leicester (h); 2.2 Barnsley (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Everton (h).									
Liverpool	24	9	1	3	26	10	4	5	2	13	9	20	45	7.2 Southampton (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Everton (h).									
Arsenal	23	8	2	2	26	9	3	6	2	16	17	16	41	8.2 Chelsea (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (h); 2.2 Bolton (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Aston Villa (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Man Utd (a); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h).									
Derby	24	9	3	0	25	7	2	3	7	14	23	9	39	7.2 Aston Villa (h); 2.2 Everton (a); 2.2 Man Utd (a); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h).									
Leeds	24	5	3	4	17	14	6	2	4	17	13	7	38	7.2 Leicester (h); 2.2 Newcastle (h); 2.2 Southampton (h); 2.2 Newcastle (h); 2.2 Bolton (a); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a).									
West Ham	24	9	1	1	26	8	2	1	10	10	27	1	35	7.2 Leeds (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Chelsea (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a).									
Leicester	24	3	7	3	13	11	5	2	4	14	11	5	33	7.2 Leeds (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Chelsea (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a).									
Newcastle	24	6	3	4	15	14	3	2	6	10	15	-4	32	7.2 West Ham (h); 2.2 Leeds (h); 2.2 Everton (a); 2.2 Liverpool (h).									
Sheff Wed	24	6	3	4	21	19	2	3	6	16	28	-10	30	7.2 Coventry (h); 2.2 Liverpool (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a); 2.2 Blackburn (h); 2.2 Leeds (a).									
Southampton	24	7	1	4	19	14	1	3	8	7	19	-7	28	2.2 Bolton (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a); 2.2 Blackburn (h); 2.2 Leeds (a).									
Coventry	24	4	7	1	19	14	2	2	8	9	20	-6	27	7.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Southampton (a); 2.2 Barnsley (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a).									
Everton	24	5	2	4	17	16	2	4	7	11	19	-8	27	7.2 Barnsley (h); 2.2 Derby (h); 2.2 Liverpool (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a).									
Aston Villa	24	5	3	4	17	16	2	3	7	9	18	-7	27	7.2 Derby (a); 2.2 Wimbledon (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Crystal Palace (a); 2.2 Blackburn (h); 2.2 Leeds (a).									
Wimbledon	23	3	3	6	12	16	3	5	3	10	11	-5	26	8.2 Crystal Palace (h); 2.2 Aston Villa (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Bolton (h).									
Crystal Palace	24	0	4	7	7	20	5	4	4	14	14	-13	23	2.2 Wimbledon (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Coventry (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Bolton (h).									
Tottenham	24	5	3	4	13	15	1	2	9	8	26	-20	23	7.2 Man Utd (a); 2.2 West Ham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Bolton (h).									
Bolton	24	3	7	2	10	12	1	3	8	11	28	-29	22	7.2 Man Utd (a); 2.2 West Ham (h); 2.2 Arsenal (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Bolton (h).									
Barnsley	24	4	2	5	12	20	2	1	10	8	39	-39	21	7.2 Everton (h); 2.2 Coventry (h); 2.2 Wimbledon (h); 2.2 Tottenham (h); 2.2 Sheff Wed (h); 2.2 Bolton (h).									

Charlton — (2) O Bury — (2) O
 Charlton Peterson, Brown, Bowen, K. Jones,
 Rufus, Chapple, Newton, Kinella, Holmes
 Robinson 68), Allen (S. Jones 61), Bright. Sub
 not used): Barnes.
 Bury Kely, Woodward, Smail, Daws, Luckett,
 Smith, Delight, Ellis, Swan (Randall 41,
 Johnruss, Watersby (Matthews 71), Randall

1000m For - (1)1
 Hooftank 25 (per)

1000m For - (1)3
 Beauchamp 48.8
 Weatherstone 50

1000m Forest Bassant, Lytle, Rogers,
 Cooper, Chettle, A. Johnson, D. Johnson
 Armstrong 88, Thomas, Van Hooftank,
 Campbell, Bonafair (Moora 88). Sub (not used);
 Asolo.

1000m Flat Whitehead, Robinson,
 1000m Flat Whitehead, Robinson,
 1000m Flat Whitehead, Robinson,

7,955. Ref: M Fischer (Warley).

boke _____ (1)1	Middletonboro ____ (1)2
avenagh 36 (pos)	Patterson 17
	Morano 81

Police Muggleton, Pickering, McKinlay,
Little, Tweed (Gabbard 87), Keen,
Mcgrove, Wallace, McMahon, Scotty.
Avenagh. Subs (not used): McNally, Taito.

Miller, Holmes, Nicholson, Sneekes
dicon 15), Murphy, Carlson, Butler,
Nixon, Hughes (Evans 88), Hunt, Kibena.
(not used); Dobson.
28,244. Rest SW Mathieson (Stockport).
Selling goatsheepers (total): 24 Van
N/donk (Nottm Forest). 19 Phillips
Nderland). 18 Angeli (Stockport);
Nixon (Inchwich: eight for Bury).

— — — — —

Blackpool -- (U) **Wigan** _____ ()
 White 8
 Lydiate 15 (og)
Blackpool Bombs, Bryan, Hills, Carlisle
 (Brabin 71), Strong, Lydiate, Bommer, Clarkson
 Ormerod (Malkin 59), Bent, Preece Sub (not
 used) Butler.
Wigan Carroll, Green, Sharp, Greenall,

York Warrington, Jones, Atkinson, Bushell, Tinkler, Barras, Murry, Pouton, Bull, Rowe (Cresswell 52), Stephenson (Greening 52), Cresswell, Jordan 62.
Att: 9.975. Ref: E Lomas (Manchester).

Robert Taylor, Lawrence (Colins 78).
 Provett, Trollips, Coleman, Neilson, Smith,
 Racewell, Moody, Lightbourne, Hayward.
 (ubs (not used): Paschold, Brooker.
 \$25,675. Paul G Cain (Boote).

19 *Thorpae* (Luton). 17 *Goats*
 (Bristol C). 15 *Hayliss* (Bristol Rvrs);
 15 *Taylor* (Brentford). 15 *Watson* (Walsall).
 14 *Aldobm* (Gillingham). 13 *Stallard*

Barnet ____ (112) **Cambridge** ____
 Heald 27, Simpson 63
 Barnett Harrison, Goodhind, Harle, Heald,
 Howarth, Stockley, Dootan, Wilson, Devine,
 McGleish (Charley 88), Simpson. Subs (no
 used): Ford, Searle.
 Cambridge: Barrett, Chenery, Wilson (Taylor
 85), Duncan, Joseph, Campbell, Wainnes.

Manfield — (7)D Notts Co —
Jones 15, 30
Manfield Bowling, Williams, Harper, Thom
(Eustace 45), Kerr (Peacock 46), Ford (Clar
84), Schofield, Sedgemore, Christie, Whit
Tallon

Shrewsbury - (1)1 **Chester** _____ (0)
 Steals 7 Woods 70
 Shrewsbury Edwards, Seabury, Tretton,
 Gayle, Hamner, Taylor, Evans, Procca, Dudge
 (White 60), Steele, Barlday. Subs (not used)
 Kerrigan, Herbert.
 Chester Sinclair, Woods, Jenkins,
 Richardson, Minor, Slad, Sargent, Paine

HUCKLEBERRY: Bangor C 1
Canby 1; Caernarfon Tn 0 Flint Tn 0; Con-
nahan's Quay 2 Porthmadog 2; Cwm-
bran 1 Aberystwyth 1; Haverfordwest 1

Cameron 30, 78
Hearts McKenzie, Locke, Nayemith,
McPherson, Salvatori, Ritchie, McConn, Fulton
Adam (Hamilton 88), Cameron, Fogel (Murray
72). Sub (not used): Cushing.
Dewless Ute Dykstra, Bowman (Easton 78),
Malpas, Pressley, Perry, Pedersen, Olafson,
Zetserland, McSwagan (Winters 85), Joneson,
McLaren. Sub (not used): Sheldmark.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Dundee	28	12	8	3	35	13	44
Falkirk	22	12	4	5	39	31	44
Raith	22	10	8	8	32	21	36
Airdrie	22	8	10	4	25	25	34
Hamilton	21	8	6	7	28	27	36
St Mirren	23	7	5	11	28	37	26
Ayr	21	8	5	10	26	32	23
Partick	22	5	5	10	22	40	25

Stearns	21	6	7	8	38	33	25
Clyde	21	8	7	8	28	31	26
Stearns	20	8	5	9	25	31	23
Inverness CT	20	5	7	8	37	29	22
Brechin	20	3	8	9	22	40	17

Clydebank . (011 Stearns — (0)0
McWilliams 87 At: 309

Arbroath — (2)2 Tindal 17 Burns 20 Aiz 608	Dumbarton — (2)2 Grace 18 J. Meehan 45
E. Strling — (2)1 Barr 75 Aiz 177	Montrose — (2)2 Wag 51 Mc-Glashan 82

ITALY	
Bologna	0
Brescia	0
Cagliari	0
Latina	0
AC Milan	1
Fiorentina	1
AS Roma	2
Venezia	3
	4
	P W D L F A Pts
Juventus	18 12 5 1 43 16 29
Inter Milan	18 12 3 3 33 13 28
Udinese	18 10 4 4 14 26 24
Parma	18 9 6 3 29 19 22
Atalanta	18 9 4 5 20 20 22
Florentina	18 8 6 4 27 20 22
AS Roma	18 7 8 3 21 21 22
Sampdoria	18 7 4 7 18 21 22
AC Milan	18 7 6 5 18 27 22
Brescia	18 6 4 8 15 24 22
Venezia	18 6 8 2 20 24 22
Verona	18 6 2 10 20 24 22
Reggina	18 6 3 8 23 27 21
Empoli	18 4 4 10 20 34 16
Genoa	18 3 7 8 15 25 16
Lucerne	18 3 2 13 16 38
Napoli	17 1 3 13 13 42 6

GERMANY			
Karlsruhe SC	1	Bayer Leverkusen	1
Saarlouis			
Hertha Berlin	1	VfL Wolfsburg	0
Schalke 04	1	Kaiserslautern	1
Werder Bremen	2	Arminia Bielefeld	1
Hansa Rostock	3	TSV 1860 Munich	0

PORTUGUESE LEAGUE: Benfica 2
Vitoria Setubal 0; Maritimo 2 Leix 0; Vito-
ria Guimaraes 0 Rio Ave 0; Sal-
gueiros 5 Campomaiorense 2; Varzim 2
Estrela Amadora 2. **Saturday:** Belen-
enses 1 Porto 0; Boavista 6 Academica 0;
Farense 1 Braga 1. **Friday:** Chaves 3
Sporting Lisbon 2. **Leading scorers:** 1

Kiddminster	26	5	8	13	33	46	23
Telford	24	5	6	13	29	48	21
Stalybridge	25	4	4	17	28	51	16
Gathead	24	2	7	15	25	54	13

UNBOND LEAGUE: Premier Division
 Accrington Stanley 0 Chorley 3;
 Bamber Bridge 0 Lancaster 1; Blyth

gertford Tn 1 Edgware Tn 0; Met Police
 3 Banstead Ath 1; Northwood 4 Tilbury 2;
 Wealdstone 2 Chalfont St Peter 0;
 Windsor & Eton 3 Cressingham 0, Witham Tn 2
 Braintree Tn 3. **Third Division**
 Canterbury Tn 6 Tring Tn 0; Corinthian Casuals
 3 Dorking 0; Croydon Ath 2 Ware 2;
 East Thurrock Utd 3 Flackwell Hth 1;
 Enam & Ewell 0 Clapton 1; Harlow Tn

Sergi Gump (Arsenal); Dušan (Coventry); Vialli (Chelsea). 13 Fowler (Liverpool)



On the level
Stewart pitches
in for England
in Trinidad
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Rugby Union 12

The Guardian Sport

Monday February 2 1998

www.football.guardian.co.uk

Bath savour their finest hour

The kicker who rules Europe

Paul Hayward salutes the nerveless Jon Callard, who steered the underdogs to a famous European Cup win over Brive at Bordeaux

SO THAT'S what they mean by journeyman: someone who keeps England's No. 1 on the bench, wins a psychological duel with a glamorous foreign counterpart and scores every last one of his team's points on the way to winning the European Cup. And to think Eric Cantona might have referred to Jonathan Callard as a "water carrier".

The journeyman had his day, all right. In Saturday's Heineken Cup final Callard kept the young buck Matt Perry out of the side, mangled Brive's Christophe Lamaison at goalkeeping and scored the game's only try in a 19-18 victory. West Country eyebrows were raised when Callard was picked ahead of Perry but they are back in their facial bays now. Lamaison might as well have been Lear.

Awful match, wonderful drama. There were 41 minutes on the clock in the second half when Bath were

awarded a penalty with the score 18-16 to Brive. Callard had been here before — at Murrayfield four years ago with England.

On that occasion he had sent a 40-yarder sailing between the posts to win the Calcutta Cup. This time, with 30,000 whistles besieging his brain, Callard mopped his brow with both sleeves and sent a little slider between the sticks and towards the water-filled moat which passes for a security device in the Stade Lescure.

Nineteen points for the water carrier, and Bath's yeomanry retreat to their own half to see off Brive and the clock. Penalty to Brive: advance, within kicking range, the previously magisterial Lamaison, with 15 points in the match already and 111 in the tournament thus far.

This time, though, there is no crisp rocket from Lamaison's boot, just a timid looping kick that falls short and to the right. Lamaison had

cracked, and then, with the game still winnable, the outside-half Lisandro Arbizu did too, shipping a drop-kick in front of the posts wide right. The whistle blows, and Callard runs "faster than I have for 12 years" along the touchline to find the Bath coach Andy Robinson. ("I wanted something soft to land on.")

'When you need someone to make that kick, JC is the man I'd bet my life on' — Andy Robinson

"JC has been a proven match-winner in all our cup and European games and when it comes to a tight situation and you need someone to make that kick, JC is the man I'd bet my life on," said Robinson as he reflected on a difficult but inspired selection. "Matt Perry will have his time."

"Andy told me I was playing on Saturday night after the Richmond defeat," said Callard. "I'd been disappointed that I wasn't involved, and Andy had explained why that was so. I desperately wanted to play against Brive."

"I've had this before. Every year I seem to get dropped for England internationals or games against Wigan. I know I'm not one of the quickest in the world and people have criticised me for that. But it's

lished it was Brive, the supposedly mighty gallopers, played bulldozer, percentage, safe, boring rugby and doubtless their fans will want to know why.

There was no adventure in them, no daring. And the image that will endure for those final dramatic 10 minutes is of Arbizu and Lamaison melting when they needed the kind of ruthless nerve that Callard had shown at the other end. The long-lost Bath spirit, perhaps.

Callard's reward was to have 5,000 Bath supporters chanting "JC, JC" where earlier there had been only a French cacophony of beating drums and shrieking horns.

This is how Bath's followers know their players: by their initials, as members of the family, almost. Callard has been there nearly a decade, and it has pained him to watch England's most successful club turn into its most tortured.

"We've been under a cloud for the last two weeks. We've been under a cloud for two years really," he said later. "People said Bath were dead and buried. Even people

closely associated with the club who are now in the media have really got stuck into us."

For him it had started badly, with a missed kick early on which had allowed Lamaison to boot Brive into a 9-0 lead. "The first one I missed was an awful, awful kick," said Callard. "When you get one right, the old stalwarts like Ollie Redman come up and give you a tap on the backside. But this one was so bad he didn't even bother to make eye contact with me."

The flag that he waved so fervently at the end was Bath's ensign raised again after so many difficult months. The banner, in fact, of England's European champions, who may be walking away from a fine tournament in their very moment of triumph.

Not that Callard will care just now. Asked the old journalists' question — "Where will you be later, Jon?" — the so-called journeyman, the water carrier, raised a single finger to the sky and said: "Up there."

Robert Armstrong, page 12



We've won... Callard greets the final whistle SIMON WILKINSON

Premiership: Aston Villa 0, Newcastle United 1

Batty drives Little's men to the depths of despair

David Lacey sees Newcastle rise while adding to Villa Park worries

ASTON VILLA looked a worried team yesterday. Newcastle United, on the other hand, merely looked concerned and won an undistinguished match at Villa Park with a goal of extreme rarity from David Batty shortly before the hour.

Newcastle's second victory in three Premiership games has restored them to the top half of the table, for the moment their situation, if unspectacular, is relatively safe. Villa, however, continue to flirt with the beginnings of a relegation problem.

Things are so tight in the Premiership's middle area that had Villa won yesterday

they would have risen five places to 10th, the position Newcastle are again occupying. As it is Brian Little's team remain only four points away from the bottom three.

Maybe the idea of Villa appearing in the Nationwide First Division next season is still a little fanciful, but their last league victory was on Boxing Day and after a 5-0 rout at Blackburn in their previous Premiership fixture the Villa supporters were anxious for signs of atonement.

Instead they saw a Villa side with their confidence shot to pieces and struggling to come to terms with opponents who appeared to be turning the corner. Though Newcastle hardly

took the breath away, they defended solidly enough and were better at the basics of tackling and passing with Andreas Andersson, their Swedish signing from Milan, holding the ball up diligently near goal.

It is surely no coincidence that the return of Alan Shearer to Newcastle's attack has been accompanied by an upturn in results. This was his fourth appearance since recovering from ankle injuries and with each game he is regaining more of his scummen.

Had Keith Gillespie made more intelligent use of the positions his pace was winning him on the right wing. Shearer might well have added a goal or two to the one he headed against Stevenage in the FA Cup a week earlier. As it was, the watching Stevenage manager Paul Fairclough could

have been forgiven the odd shiver which was not entirely a product of the afternoon's chill. Shearer should prosper in Wednesday's replay.

Not that there was much else to hold the interest yesterday. The first half amounted to little more than a pig's ear with Villa meeting the sow's ear that Kenny Dalglish has made of the silk purse Kevin Keegan left behind.

Until half-time approached Newcastle could not even pass themselves off as thieving Magpies. Then Shearer ducked in to meet a dipping cross from Gillespie and, while Mark Bosnich kept the ball out, the moment was as ominous for Villa as it was encouraging for their opponents.

Throughout, neither side passed the ball consistently well or with much imagination, but Batty did not waste much and this did much to help Newcastle get a modicum of a game together. Villa's midfield remained pedestrian and predictable and though Dwight Yorke frequently came deep to find space they never sustained an attack long enough to exert serious pressure.

This was by no means Stan Collymore's worst game for Villa. More than once he used his pace and strength to run at defenders in an attempt to expose Newcastle's cover. But neither he nor Yorke achieved much inside the penalty area, which was where Villa so desperately needed touches of inspiration.

Their best moment of the first half came in the 40th minute when Ricardo Semeca nodded back Mark Draper's corner for Ugo Ehiogu to head a foot over. Soon after the interval Yorke achieved a sharp shot through Stuart Pearce's legs but it did not trouble Shaka Hislop.

The goal arrived after 58 minutes and stemmed from an error by Alan Wright. Villa's little left wing-back. A moment of hesitancy deep in his own half allowed Batty to gain possession. He drove the ball into the middle, where it was met by Shearer with a quick shot on the turn.

Ehiogu, never far away from the England striker, blocked it but the ball rebounded straight back to Batty, who sent a low, finely angled drive into the far corner despite Bosnich getting both hands to it. It was Batty's first goal since a prodigious 40-yard lob found the Wimbledon net at the beginning of last season.

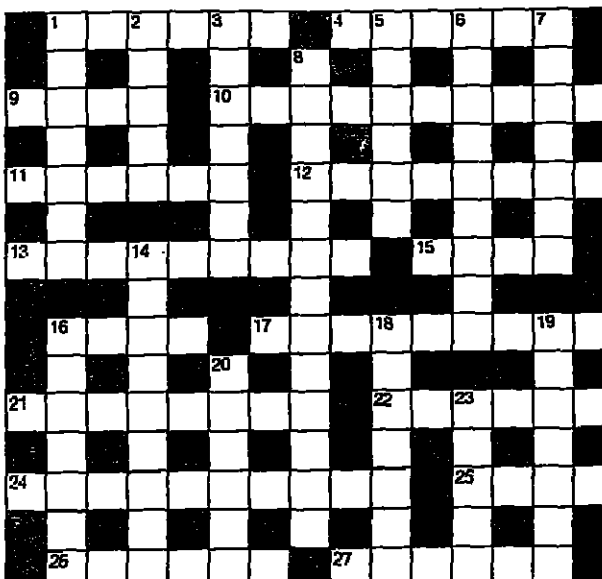
Little admitted afterwards that his Villa team are involved in the relegation scrap. "I'm concerned about the drop," he said. "A lot of teams are in it. You know you'll be criticised if you're in the wrong part of the table, and you deserve that."



Taking a high ride... Keith Gillespie uses his marker, Alan Wright, as a prop at Villa Park yesterday PHOTOGRAPH PHIL COLE

Guardian Crossword No 21,187

Set by Rufus



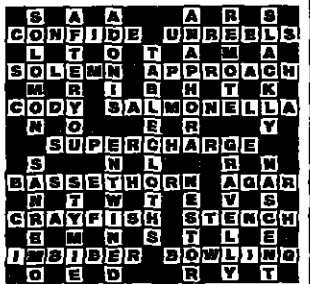
Across

- 1 Opposed states start to erupt (6)
- 4 Misdeed on a battleground (6)
- 9 Governors back in nursery education (4)
- 10 A bishop has the answer — forgiveness (10)
- 11 Central roundabout poorly lit in a way (6)
- 12 Star embraced by girl in US entertainment centre (3,5)
- 13 Not at all simple to work out in detail (9)
- 15 Influence authority (4)
- 16 Employer provides a course in the City (4)
- 17 Letting in or out (9)
- 21 Toothsome vegetable — but only grows for show (5,3)
- 22 Litter container (6)

- 24 Orchestrate popular march to entertain the troops (10)
- 25 Outbreak of rain in the country (4)
- 26 Strain to find way about the ship (6)
- 27 A VIP too (2,4)

Down

- 1 Lamb, say, is uncommonly unflattering (7)
- 2 Right for boy to hold hands (5)
- 3 Surprise Mum with an unusual treat (7)
- 5 Very much like sauce (6)
- 6 It's worth time developing common sense (5,3)
- 7 Loan may be arranged, though it's irregular (7)
- 8 Single instances of patients in quarantine? (8,5)
- 14 Wanderer organising a fête gets in the drink (9)



WINNERS OF PRIZE PUZZLE 21,186
This week's winners of a Collins English Dictionary are: Stuart Kersey of Mill Hill, London, NW7; Mr. S. Reed of Tadworth, Surrey; Barbara Wright of Ashbourne, Derbyshire; M. E. Gray of Shaw, Oldham; and Mr. J. Brewster of Chester-Le-Street, Co. Durham.
Please allow 28 days for delivery

- 16 Takes turns off and relaxes (7)
- 18 Imputes false motive (7)
- 19 Girl holds bet incorrectly in game (7)
- 20 Speaks about university places (6)
- 23 We'd be lost without him! (5)

Solution tomorrow

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